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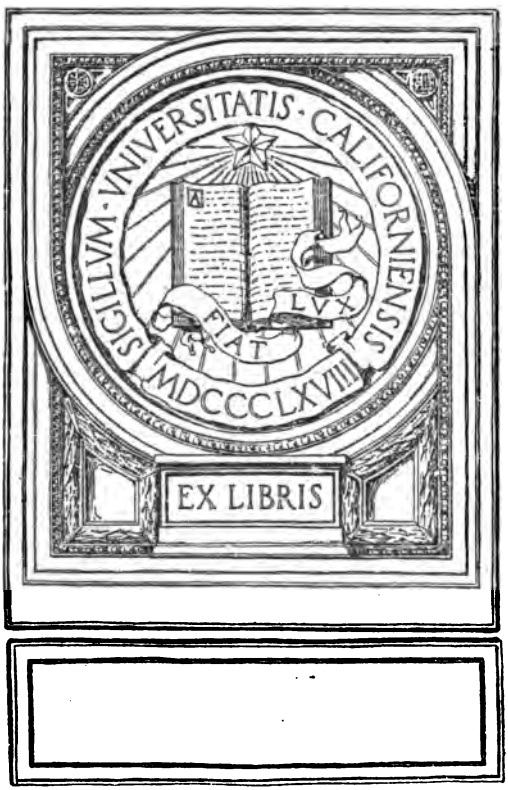
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HISTORY

THE

INTERPRETER OF PROPHECY,

OR,

A VIEW

OF

SCRIPTURAL PROPHECIES

AND

THE [illegible] NT

OF

Paſt and Preſent [illegible] of the WORLD.

WITH

CONJECTURES RESPECTING THEIR FUTURE COMPLETION.

Firſt publiſhed in the Year 1799.

BY HENRY KETT, B.D.

FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD, AND ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S PREACHERS AT WHITEHALL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

THE FIFTH EDITION,

WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES.

London:

PRINTED BY BYE AND LAW, ST. JOHN'S-SQUARE, FOR THE AUTHOR;

AND SOLD BY F. AND C. RIVINGTON, NO. 62, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1805.

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TO THE RIGHT REVEREND

GEORGE PRETYMAN, D.D. F.R.S.

LORD BISHOP OF LINCOLN,

WHOSE ARDENT AND UNREMITTING ZEAL

FOR THE INTERESTS OF RELIGION,

AND STEADY REGARD FOR LEARNING;

WHOSE CONDUCT AS A MAN,

AND WHOSE VIGILANCE AS A PRELATE,

DEMAND THE GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

OF EVERY FRIEND

TO THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH OF ENGLAND;

ESPECIALLY AT A PERIOD,

WHEN SUCH EXAMPLES ARE EMINENTLY USEFUL

TO

THE CAUSE OF CHRISTIANITY;

THE FOLLOWING WORK,

IS, WITH PROFOUND RESPECT,

INSCRIBED,

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S

OBLIGED AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

HENRY KETT.

PREFACE.

THE aſtoniſhing progreſs made by infidelity in the preſent age of the world, evidently requires from the friends of Chriſtianity a peculiar degree of energy and vigilance in the cauſe of Religious Truth. They cannot fail to recollect, that, although Religion itſelf is invulnerable againſt every attack which artifice and violence direct againſt it, it is their indiſpenſible duty to exert their utmoſt efforts to check the ravages of an enemy ſo fatal to the dearest intereſts of man: and no mode of protection againſt its contagious ſpirit ſeems better calculated for general uſe, than A FULL AND CLEAR ELUCIDATION OF THE PROPHETICAL PARTS OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

The evidence derived from PROPHECY in ſupport of REVELATION, is a progreſſive and an accumulating evidence, which

ſhines with increaſing brightneſs as time advances in its courſe, and collects ſtrength from each ſucceeding age. And as the extraordinary events NOW PASSING BEFORE OUR EYES will be found to augment the ſplendour of its light, and to give force to its ſtrength, while they receive in return a ray from Divine truth, which diſcovers their origin, and points out their courſe; it may be preſumed, that a ſummary view of the Prophecies is particularly SUITED TO STRIKE THE MINDS OF THE PRESENT GENERATION, WHO SEEK IN VAIN FOR ANY OTHER ADEQUATE EXPLANATION OF OCCURRENCES SO DEEPLY INTERESTING TO THEMSELVES.

HISTORY, which conſtitutes a material branch of our education, aſſumes the greateſt dignity of character, when ſhe becomes the companion of RELIGION, and the Interpreter of the Oracles of God. Her volumes preſent the moſt wonderful diſcoveries, and reflect the images of the prophetical parts of the Bible. The works of the writers of all ages and countries — whether Pagans — Chriſtians — Jews — antient, or even modern Infidels — whatever their opinions, prejudices,

dices, or designs, unfold the myſteries of prediction, ſhow the fulfilment of the Divine will, and in reality advance the intereſts of Revelation.

The following Work is intended to ſet theſe truths in a ſtriking point of view; IT DISPLAYS THE HARMONY OF PROPHECY—THE ONE GREAT SCHEME THAT PERVADES ALL ITS PARTS—AND THE CONCURRENCE OF ALL HUMAN EVENTS TO ACCOMPLISH ITS STUPENDOUS PLAN.

Fully aware that this work falls extremely ſhort of that excellence which the ſubject demands, I lament that ſuch a ſketch of Prophetical and Hiſtorical harmony as the times ſeem urgently to require, delineating preſent as well as paſt occurrences with a faithful and an able pencil, and marking them with the colours of ſtrong and vivid deſcription, has not hitherto been offered to the public. I am perſuaded, that ſuch a work would moſt effectually anſwer the ends which theſe Volumes are moſt ſeriouſly intended to promote—namely, to eſtabliſh the doubtful, to recal the wandering, to awaken the thoughtleſs, to inſtruct the

unlearned—and more particularly to produce in the minds of the rising generation so strong a conviction of the superintendence of the Almighty over the affairs of the world—of the Divine origin of the Gospel—and the momentous concerns of another life, that they may view the FOLLY and the WICKEDNESS of the NEW PHILOSOPHY in their proper light, and ever stand up as THE FIRM SUPPORTERS OF THE SACRED CAUSE OF CHRISTIANITY.

Before I conclude this Preface, I must make an acknowledgment, which is no less due to justice, than satisfactory to my own feelings of gratitude. I have received so much assistance in the prosecution of this Work, as greatly to invalidate my claims to being reputed its Author. The plan originated with an ardent Friend to the cause of Religion, who was led, by a very extensive knowledge of History and Scripture, to consider the passing train of events with peculiar attention; and forcibly struck by their agreement with the Divine word, was anxious to represent this enlightening and consolatory truth to the public. From this Person, whose name I am not at liberty to mention, and

whoſe anxiety for the ſucceſs of this Publication is perfectly diſintereſted, I have not only received many judicious corrections of what I had written, but ſuch valuable communications as are deſervedly ſubſtituted for many of the materials which I had prepared for the preſs. I had alſo the advantage of ſubmitting my papers to the peruſal of the learned and excellent Prelate, to whom I am allowed the honour of inſcribing this Work; to whoſe enlightened and comprehenſive views of the ſubject of Prophecy itſelf, I am happy to acknowledge my obligations; and to whom the public are indebted for the firſt intimation of the PRINCIPLE that alone can explain the extraordinary events which excite univerſal attention[a]. I congratulate my Readers on my having obtained ſuch important aſſiſtance, as it has ſtamped that value upon the Volumes now offered to their notice, which I am confident could not have been derived from my own unaided labours.

[a] See the Biſhop of Lincoln's excellent Diſcourſe on the Day of Public Thankſgiving, 1797.

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VOLUME II.

OF THE FIRST * EDITION.

THIS Work has been delayed and increaſed much beyond the original deſign, ſtated in the Introductory Chapter to the firſt Volume. This delay and this increaſe are to be attributed to my anxiety to obtain from the ſame Pen, to which I am indebted for ſo much aſſiſtance in the firſt Volume, A DEVELOPEMENT OF THE PROPHETICAL SCHEME CONCERNING ANTICHRIST; being well convinced that no one could preſent this new and comprehenſive ſyſtem to the public in ſo clear a light, as the perſon with

* This Work was firſt published in three Volumes, 12mo. The ſecond volume commenced with the Introductory Chapter to the ſecond Claſs of Prophecies, and the third Volume contained the third and fourth Chapters of the ſame Claſs.

whom

whom the ideas originated. To this Person I am obliged for the whole of the following Preliminary Chapter, excepting only the Historical proofs of the early opinions, concerning the Papal Antichrist—and for nearly the whole of the third Volume.

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TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

THE concealed Author of the chief part of this Work considers it as a duty he owes to himself, the Public, and the sacred Nature of the Subject itself, to add to a new Edition such Observations as appear to him elucidatory and important. He has chosen to place them as Notes, rather than to insert them in the Text, in order to mark their date. The Text remains unaltered, excepting B. 394, vol. I. wherein is now placed the Quotation from "The Layman," adopted in the 3d Edition, and standing there as a Note.

GENERAL TABLE

OF

CONTENTS.

VOLUME I.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

CLASS I.

PROPHECIES WHICH HAVE BEEN FULFILLED—DOWN TO THE SUBVERSION OF THE JEWISH GOVERNMENT.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

CHAP-

CONTENTS.

CONTENTS.

CLASS II.

PROPHECIES RELATING TO THE REIGN OF ANTICHRIST, AND THE REIGN AND FINAL TRIUMPH OF THE MESSIAH.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

Third

VOLUME II.

CLASS II.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

CHAPTER

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

NO one, who believes in the existence of a God, can doubt the Divine Knowledge of all Things past, present, and to come, or the Divine Power to reveal those things to men in such measure, and on such occasions, as Divine Wisdom directs. To God, the past, the present, and the future, must be the same. —He views the greatest and most wonderful events in their remotest causes; the longest series appears but as one object to his all-seeing eye, and the whole scheme of those events is altogether presented to the Divine Mind, of which mortals only catch a glimpse, and survey the broken parts. But while the prescience of the Almighty is universally acknowledged, his superintending Providence is frequently denied. Plunging into the abyss of metaphysical abstraction, man tries in vain to fathom its depth with the short line of his finite understanding; and, unable to reconcile the superintending and directing Providence of God with his

ideas of the free will of man, the mists of doubt conceal this rock of consolation, hope, and joy, to which the Scriptures point as his security; and he either struggles comfortless against the ills of life, or coldly resigns himself to the laws of fate, or the fluctuations of chance. To believe, that the Almighty Creator is also the constant Governor of the universe, is a point of considerable importance to human happiness; and to establish this doctrine upon solid ground is of considerable importance to the interests of Religion. It is the design of this work to draw conviction from the sacred source of Prophecy.—But here it may be asked by those who freely acknowledge the power of God to declare his will to mankind by a special Revelation, whether it clearly appears, that he actually *has* done so? A satisfactory answer to this very serious question will be found in an attentive examination of those writings, which the Jewish and the Christian Church agree in believing to be prophetic. And many others have been given.—The certainty of Revelation has been variously as well as repeatedly proved. It is not the defect in proof, but the want of investigation, that produces infidelity. For notwithstanding the pretensions of the present age to zeal for

for truth, who now will even read the laborious researches of her faithful advocates, Chillingworth, Stillingfleet, Pearson, Hooker, Warburton, Cudworth, Leland, or Butler? Even Maurice is neglected*, though the charms of novelty, of poetic fiction, and of a florid style unite to decorate the pillar, which he has patiently built up in her support, from a quarry, which her enemies have long considered as their exclusive property. It is forgotten, that while nothing is more easy, than to bring forward a multitude of objections in a very small volume, it is absolutely impossible to answer them within the same compass; and the generality of readers, it is to be feared, imagine that those objections, which almost daily issue from the press, in the form best calculated for extensive circulation, are the discoveries of this enlightened age; whereas they are in fact only old arguments and objections, furbished up with the polish of modern writing, or the spirit of modern wit and falsehood, and have long ago been proved to have neither weight nor value. Let it however be remembered, that a truth once proved, is

* *Since* the first publication of this work, the neglect abovementioned has ceased to be so great a subject of complaint.

proved for ever. No rational mind will admit it poſſible for the utmoſt force which objections can muſter to overthrow a ſingle *demonſtration*, or what Dr. Jeremy Taylor has ſhown to be nearly of equal ſtrength, a *moral certainty*.

Theſe conſiderations have urged me to try whether *one* argument, which I conſider as proving incontrovertibly both the certainty of Revelation and its chief deſign, could not be compreſſed within narrow limits in ſuch a manner, as to ſtrike, and not tire the attention. And it is with the earneſt hope of accompliſhing this great object, that I ſhall lay before the reader ſome few of the moſt remarkable Prophecies, capable of the ſhorteſt and plaineſt application, in two diſtinct claſſes, and ſubjoin the facts, which have fulfilled them. The relation of theſe facts I ſhall take from the moſt authentic and approved hiſtorians, both ancient and modern; and confirm every ſtatement by obſervations, authorized by writers diſtinguiſhed for their learning, penetration, judgment, and impartiality, in order to give indiſputable authority to each application of the Prophecies to the events, ſtated as their accompliſhment, and to the concluſions, that will be deduced from them.

FIRST

FIRST CLASS.—Prophecies which have been fulfilled,—down to the ſubverſion of the Jewiſh government.

SECOND CLASS.—Prophecies relating to the reign of Antichriſt, and the reign and final triumph of the Meſſiah.

The Prophecies which I have ſelected for the FIRST Claſs will be ſhewn to have been accompliſhed, by the events to which they are referred, in the fulleſt ſenſe, and moſt accurate manner. It will be proved, that the *facts recorded* have preciſely agreed with the *facts predicted*, and the *time*, when time is mentioned in the Prophecy, with the *time predicted*.

The Prophecies I have choſen for the SECOND Claſs, are ſuch as are in part fulfilled, and are, therefore, ſo far eſtabliſhed upon ſafe ground by paſt time, and accompliſhment; and are thus rendered more clearly and certainly proper objects of our attention and inquiry. But as I ſhall conſider them with a particular view to the preſent ſtate of the world, and ſhall be led to offer an opinion relative to the connexion, which they appear to have as parts of one Power, and to

hazard a conjecture respecting the course of their completion, I have separated this Class from the former, that the great argument to be derived from the clear and exact accomplishment of Prophecy may rest entirely upon the acknowledged truth of historical facts.

That these Prophecies were delivered at the time, and by the persons, to whom they are commonly assigned;—that they were delivered *before* the events they predict; and that they professed to be prophetic at the time of their delivery, and were so understood to be, by the greatest and most learned persons, at and after their delivery, are points, that have been long esteemed established, beyond the power of controversy. But none are secure from contradiction; and the infatuating folly of the present day makes men perpetually mistake *assertion* for *argument*. It will not be expected in a work, which professedly aims at conciseness, that what may be called a preliminary subject should be treated very fully. For the detail of proofs, I must refer the reader to those learned authors, who have collected the various evidence, and from thence have most clearly deduced incontestable conclusions in support of the authenticity of the Scriptures;

Scriptures; and who consequently give ample confirmation to the truth of these points. But I cannot pass them over intirely. And I wish to give the reader, if yet unacquainted with their history, some information relative to those Prophets, whose writings will be the subjects of discussion—premising a few observations respecting the scene of Prophecy, and saying a few words concerning the Prophets in general, before I enter upon the short account of the history and explanation of the nature and use of Prophecy itself, with which I shall conclude this *preparatory* Chapter.

The principal scene of Prophecy, after the death of Moses, was the country of Judea:—a country of little eminence when compared with the mighty empires of the earth; but not so *very* inconsiderable as it is usually represented, when compared more justly with kingdoms which existed nearer to its ancient date[a]. The truth is, that we annex certain ideas

[a] Porphyry, who lived in the third century, and was an acute and learned writer against Christianity, confessed that Moses flourished near 1000 years before any of the Greek Philosophers; and it is well known that Herodotus, the *earliest* Grecian Historian, was contemporary

ideas of dignity and greatneſs to the kingdoms of Troy, of Argos, of Crete, of Lydia, and the different ſtates of Greece, becauſe the poets and hiſtorians magnify their importance in our youthful minds, and becauſe we never loſe ſight of them while we purſue our ſtudies.—Whereas the Iſraelites, ſeparated from the reſt of the world for the expreſs purpoſe of preſerving the Oracles of God, quietly ſettled in the promiſed land, which they had conquered in far more remote antiquity, or ſuffering in captivity the predicted puniſhment of diſobedience to their law, are ſeldom preſented to our notice by thoſe authors in whom we are accuſtomed to confide for our knowledge of ancient hiſtory.—With the kingdom of Iſrael we are little acquainted, except as it forms a part of early religious inſtruction; and the reverence with which we may be diſpoſed to remember it, is often abated when we diſcover the low eſtimation in which it is generally held with reſpect to the dazzling points of ſplendor, power, and fame. It may however be aſked, which of the great monarchies of the ancient world exceeded in magnificence the Court

porary with Malachi, the *laſt* of the Prophets.—Hence Joſephus ſpeaks with great contempt of the late origin of Grecian literature.

of

of Solomon, and the Temple of Jerusalem? The astonishment, admiration, and awe, expressed by Alexander[b] and by Titus, when they beheld the Temple, preclude the idea of exaggerated description, and appear to establish its claim to superior grandeur and riches, while the simple patriarchal manners of the people (manners which still prevail in Arabia and in a part of India) must increase the wonder. With respect to power, and its attendant, fame, the Israelites were forbidden to extend their conquests beyond certain limits; for it is evident, that their reputation in the world as a people made no part of the intended object, for which they were distinguished by the Almighty—perhaps was inconsistent with it:—but nothing human could resist the power with which they were endued, whenever they were permitted to exert it. It is allowed, however, that the frequent punishments, to which they were subjected by their frequent disobedience to the commands of God, confined the nation much within the bounds prescribed, till the age when Solomon "reigned over all the kings, from the river Euphrates, even unto the land

[b] See Bishop Newton on the Prophecies, and Josephus, lib. vi. c. iv. &c.

of

of the Philiſtines, and to the borders of Egypt[c]," and "exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wiſdom," and, it may be added, for "honour" or fame[d]; a fact to which eaſtern tradition ſtill gives teſtimony.—It is allowed too, that this extended greatneſs of the kingdom was of ſhort duration, and that it ſeemed to ſink into inſignificance juſt as the kingdoms of the Heathen world roſe into importance: but it is maintained, that all theſe circumſtances confirm the credibility of the Jewiſh hiſtory, becauſe they are all in ſtrict conformity with the *conditional* promiſes and the *prophetic word* of God, and with the great deſign for which the Jews were to continue a *peculiar people*. The ignorance and the obſcurity imputed to the Jewiſh people will, indeed, furniſh no inconſiderable argument to prove the divine origin of their prophecies.—If their knowledge and their experience were limited to the narrow confines of their own country—if their means of information were ſmall, and their connexions with other nations precarious and accidental, they had the leſs ground to foretell, with any probability of being right, the

[c] 2 Chron. ix. 26.

[d] 1 Kings iv. 34.—iii. 13. 2 Chron. i. 12.

future

future condition of other nations; and much less to decide positively and circumstantially as to their decline, decay, and ruin. And yet we find that the great events of foreign states, the fate of Nineveh, of Tyre, and of Babylon, the revolutions of Greece, and the power of Rome, were exactly foretold, and the predictions as exactly fulfilled.

Having premised thus much concerning the *scene* of Prophecy, I now hasten to the Prophets themselves.

Moses was of the tribe of Levi, and was born in Egypt during the bondage of the Children of Israel, in the year before Christ 1567, and in the year of the World 2433[c]. He was ~~miraculously~~ providentially rescued from destruction by the daughter of Pharaoh, of which circumstance his name Moses, or Moyses, which signifies in the Egyptian language, *preserved out of water*, is descriptive; and he was educated by her direction in all the learning and

[c] Calmet's Dictionary: Articles Moses, Vol. II. p. 228, Bible, Vol. I. p. 292. Prophets, Vol. II. p. 455. Pentateuch, Vol. II. p. 379. Grotius de Veritate Christianæ Religionis. Du Pin's Canon. Du Pin's Ecclesiastical History. Watson's Apology for the Bible. Gray's Key, p. 45, &c.

accom-

accomplishments of the Egyptians. He was chosen by God to be the deliverer and lawgiver of the Children of Israel, and to conduct them to the land of Canaan, according to the promise given to their father Abraham. He died in the 120th year of his age, "when his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated," on mount Nebo, on the borders of that land, which it was declared by the Lord he should see, but not enter. As a prophet he was eminently distinguished. The Jews have constantly attributed to him the highest degree of inspiration; and in the New Testament he is always mentioned with singular honour. By the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, and other heathen nations, Moses was acknowledged not only as the most ancient lawgiver, and as an historian of the strictest veracity, but, according to the style, in which they expressed their veneration for the greatest characters of antiquity, he was placed among the Gods, and worshipped under various names. And writers of the earliest ages have either confirmed his history by yet earlier tradition, or have borrowed from thence the ground-work of their fictions. He has been celebrated as a general, a legislator, a prophet, and a *magician* by prophane writers of almost all descriptions, and of

of almoſt all ages; and his character is eſtabliſhed by the uninterrupted teſtimony, which the Jews have given, from the time in which he lived to the preſent hour. His writings we ſhall conſider preſently.

Iſaiah was of the tribe of Judah, and of noble birth. He began to prophesy about B. C. 758, Y. W. 3246, was nearly contemporary with Hoſea, Joel, Amos, and Micah, and, according to a tradition among the Jews, was put to death in the firſt year of the reign of Manaſſeh, B. C. 698. His name, which ſignifies *the ſalvation of Jehovah*, is ſtrongly deſcriptive of the character of his prophecies, which give a remarkably clear and accurate view of the Meſſiah and his kingdom, and he is therefore emphatically ſtyled by Chriſtian writers, the *Evangelical* Prophet.

Jeremiah was of the line of the prieſthood, and conſequently of the tribe of Levi. He was called to the prophetic office, which he exerciſed for more than 40 years, nearly at the ſame time with Zephaniah, in the 13th year of the reign of Joſiah. He was permitted to remain in Judea, the deſolation of which he ſo pathetically laments, after the firſt conqueſt of Jeruſalem by Nebuchadnezzar,

nezzar, and was afterwards carried with his disciple Baruch into Egypt, where he was put to death. The Chronicle of Alexandria relates, that the Egyptians were incensed against him on account of his predictions concerning their kingdom; but that Alexander the Great, hearing what he had foretold concerning himself, visited the place of his burial, and ordered this Prophet's urn to be removed to Alexandria, where he built a magnificent monument to his memory. Constantine the Great afterwards erected a tomb to his memory near Jerusalem, at the place where it was supposed he usually resided; but as Ptolemy received the former account as genuine, it is far more probable that he died in Egypt.

Daniel was a descendant of the kings of Judah; he was carried captive to Babylon in the fourth year of the reign of Jehoiakim, B. C. 602, Y. W. 3398, when he was about 18 years of age. His illustrious birth, various accomplishments, and consummate wisdom, raised him to the highest honours, first in the Babylonian, and afterwards in the Persian court. He publicly professed and practised the worship of his God, in defiance of every danger, and boldly predicted his fearful

fearful judgments to two of the moſt powerful and haughty tyrants of the earth, when called upon to explain the ſigns which they confeſſed to be ſent from heaven. Daniel contributed much towards ſpreading the knowledge of God among the Gentile nations, both during his life, which was extended to a great length, and by the number of his predictions relating to them, which ſoon became generally known, and ſome of which were ſoon fulfilled. It is generally believed he died at Suſa, the capital of Perſia, where he had built a moſt magnificent edifice, mentioned by Joſephus, as a ſepulchre for the Perſian and Parthian kings.

Malachi lived about 400 years before the birth of Chriſt. His name, which ſignifies *his Angel or Meſſenger*, like that of Iſaiah, alludes to the principal ſubject of his Prophecy. This Prophet ſaw the ſecond Temple completed, and the ſacred rites of worſhip reeſtabliſhed after the return of the Jews from the Babyloniſh captivity, and cloſed the ſeries of Prophets which had been continued from the time of Moſes, with the promiſe of another meſſenger, who ſhould immediately precede the long-expected Meſſiah.

It

It muſt not be imagined that the Prophets were always under the influence of the divine Spirit, or exempt from the common frailties and infirmities of human nature;—but it may be affirmed, that there was not one in this long ſeries of 1000 years, whoſe character does not juſtly command our veneration. Piety, obedience to the commands of God, indifference to the pleaſures and ſufferings of this life, as far as they related to themſelves, united with the keeneſt ſenſibility to the miſery or the happineſs of their country, and the moſt ardent and active zeal in executing the ſacred but often painful duties of their office, appear eminently, though not equally conſpicuous in them all. "They were the eſtabliſhed oracles of their country, and conſulted upon all occaſions when it was neceſſary to collect the divine will on any civil or religious queſtion: and we hear of no ſchiſms or diviſions while they flouriſhed. They even condeſcended to inform the people of common concerns in trivial caſes, in order to preclude them from all pretence or excuſe for reſorting to idolatrous practices and heathen divinations; and they were always furniſhed with ſome preſcribed mode of conſulting God, or obtained revelation by prayer. Sometimes the Holy Spirit ſuggeſted the

matter

matter and not the words to the Prophets—ſometimes by an audible voice dictated every word and expreſſion—ſometimes the Prophets were left to deſcribe in their own language the hieroglyphical dreams and viſions, which they beheld; and hence is the ſtyle of every Prophet more or leſs perſpicuous, according to the nature and clearneſs of the Revelation imparted to him, and likewiſe characterized with peculiar diſcriminations reſulting from education, and particular intercourſe and habits of life. But ſometimes they were inſtructed in the very expreſſions they ſhould uſe; and when writing under the influence of that inſpiration, they underſtood not always the full importance and extent of them; writing for the advantage of thoſe that were to come after, and to furniſh evidence in ſupport of a future diſpenſation, they might not perceive the full ſcope, nor foreſee diſtinctly the ſpiritual accompliſhment of the Prophecies they recorded[f]."

We find them conſtantly appealing to well known facts, for the fulfilment of many of their predictions, and perfectly conſiſtent in their communications of the divine will. As

[f] Gray's Key, p. 329, &c.

 their

their number increaſed, the truth of their declarations was eſtabliſhed by the courſe of events; and there was an accumulation of evidence to prove, that, in the emphatic language of Scripture, "Holy men ſpake as they were taught of God." Influenced by the guidance of the ſame ſpirit, they united in the moſt perfect harmony of deſign; they delivered the ſame precepts to be obſerved, the ſame puniſhments to be avoided, and the ſame bleſſings to be hoped for. Conſidered ſeparately, every one of them was a burning and a ſhining light, ordained to beam upon the dark generation, in which he lived: and, conſidered collectively, they form one bright and glorious aſſemblage, to enlighten and impreſs the world with admiration of the power, the wiſdom, and the goodneſs of God.

The writings of but few of theſe numerous Prophets have been preſerved in the Jewiſh Canon. Some of the earlier Prophets ſeem, indeed, to have been appointed for the peculiar ſervice of the Children of Iſrael, and as the means of preſerving them diſtinct from other nations: but the later Prophets were to be of more general and extenſive ſervice, as they approached nearer to that great event,

in which both Jews and Gentiles were equally interested.

We have not merely as good reason to believe that "the Prophecies were delivered at the time, and by the persons, to whom they are commonly-assigned," as to believe that Cicero wrote and pronounced his orations against Cataline and Antony, in the century before Christ, and that Virgil wrote his poems in the reign of Augustus; but we have a regular succession of testimony to the truth of this proposition, which the Jews have brought down to the present times.—And the universally high estimation, in which these writings appear from various historical evidence to have been held, from nearly the time of their delivery, will assuredly establish the other propositions stated in page 6, in the mind of an impartial enquirer.

I shall only observe further, that they were translated into Chaldee about the year before Christ 420, and into Greek, the language then most generally understood, in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, an era remarkable for investigation and science, and which being *after* the predictions, and *before* many of the events which have since fulfilled them, clearly

prove these writings to have been handed down to us, without alteration. Especially when we consider, that the multiplicity of copies, which were spread into all nations by the Jewish colonies, from the time of the captivity, were constantly read in all the synagogues, and open to the perusal of all people —were translated into many different languages—quoted by many historians—and their truth doubted by none, till within a very recent period.

I shall now state very shortly as much of the *history*, and the *nature* and *use* of Prophecy, as will put the reader in fair possession of the subject he is called upon to consider.—A believer in the Scriptures conceives that some memory of God, and some knowledge of the dispensations of his Providence having been preserved traditionally from Adam (confirmed probably by other occasional communications of the divine will), through the antediluvian world, the few who kept up in their lives any just sense of his providence were by means of Prophecy, and the miraculous interposition of their Maker, saved out of the general wreck of the deluge—That after a time, the impression of even that awful lesson wearing out of the mind of the greatest

greateſt part of mankind, it pleaſed the Supreme Being not to leave himſelf without a particular as well as a general witneſs; and therefore he again choſe one of the few families, who preſerved their belief and knowledge of him, and truſted them with the promiſes of his mercy.—And leſt this again ſhould ſuffer by the vague nature of all tradition; he, before the recollection of their father Abraham had faded from the minds of any of his deſcendants, and while the hiſtory of the world and of the earlier Patriarchs, which had been brought down in regular ſucceſſion through but very few generations [g], was well known to them, appointed Moſes to explain the creation and the ſtate of man on earth; to record the intentions of God towards man, and to be under him the lawgiver of this family, now becoming a nation, and deſtined to preſerve this hiſtory, theſe records, and theſe laws, to the end of the

[g] The tradition was conveyed from Adam through Methuſelah, Noah, Abraham, Iſaac, Joſeph, and Amram, to Moſes, ſeven intermediate perſons—and of theſe ſeven, ſeveral were a long time contemporary with each other. Methuſelah was contemporary with both Adam and Noah; Shem with Noah and Abraham; Iſaac with Abraham and Joſeph; and Amram the grandſon of Levi (who was the brother of Joſeph) was the father of Moſes.

world. From this period, therefore, is to be dated the beginning of written Prophecy.

Moſes, the firſt and greateſt of the Prophets whoſe works have been tranſmitted to us, recorded the wonders of creation and providence, from the beginning of time, till the arrival of the Iſraelites at the borders of the land promiſed to the children of Abraham—a period of above 2500 years—eſtabliſhed the covenant of God with his choſen people—ſet before them the conditional promiſes of God—drew a ſtrong and accurate picture of their national character and fate for a ſeries of ages, which are ſtill running their courſe—and predicted the appearance of another "Prophet like unto himſelf" (by which, according to all antient interpretation, is to be underſtood another *Lawgiver*), to whom he commanded them "to hearken," under pain of the heavy diſpleaſure of the Lord their God. —The Prophets, who followed Moſes in continual ſucceſſion for above a thouſand years, were employed in preſerving the remembrance of the gracious promiſes of future Redemption to fallen man, and the knowledge of a future ſtate of retribution—in keeping up a ſenſe of the conſtant ſuperintending providence of God over all the world—in gradually

dually explaining the ſpiritual and typical meaning of the Moſaical Law, and in preparing the Jews for the reception of that ſecond diſpenſation, which it prefigured, and was deſigned to introduce at the appointed time, as the promiſed univerſal bleſſing. The great object of Prophecy being a deſcription of the Meſſiah, and of his kingdom, the prophetic miniſtry ceaſed when that object had been ſufficiently diſplayed.—At the period allotted by the Prophet Daniel, for "ſealing up the Viſion and the Prophecy"—after the peaceable re-eſtabliſhment of the Jews in their own land—and within about 400 years of the time appointed for the appearance of Chriſt, Malachi cloſed the prophetic volume in a manner which ſtrikingly confirms this truth, "that the teſtimony of Jeſus is the ſpirit of Prophecy." He threatens the Jews with puniſhment and rejection; declaring that God would "make his name great among the Gentiles," for that he was wearied with the impiety of Iſrael: he exhorts them earneſtly to repent, and to obſerve the law of Moſes, till that prophetic meſſenger ſhould appear, who, like "a harbinger, was to prepare the way of the Lord, whom they ſought," i. e. for the Meſſiah—"who would ſuddenly come to his temple"—and whoſe approach

was hailed, as that "Sun of righteousness, who should arise with healing in his wings."

It is obvious, that if the Prophecies in the antient Scriptures relating to the first advent of the Messiah were fulfilled in Christ—and if "the wall of partition between the Jews and Gentiles was then thrown down," many of the principal subjects of the Prophecies under the Law can have no place in the Prophecies under the Gospel. We accordingly find the *kingdom* of Christ to be the sole great object of Prophecy in the New Testament; and this distinction gives fresh evidence to the unity of design, which pervades both covenants—especially as it is certain that *many* of the Prophecies in *both* upon this ever important subject exactly correspond: and none can be found, in which there is the shadow of contradiction. Of the prophecies which are contained in the New Testament, I shall only briefly remark, that they extend to the end of the world, and particularly describe the state of the Church—its trials, increase, prosperity, corruption, sufferings, and purification—from the time of its lowly origin (for lowly did it seem to mortal eyes) to its universal prevalence and triumphant entrance into glory—and conclude this sketch of the *history* of Prophecy

phecy with obſerving, that ſince the Revelation by St. John cloſed the New Teſtament, 1700 years have elapſed without the appearance of any Prophet in the world.

It may be obſerved of the Prophecies themſelves, that they were not only neceſſarily miraculous, but of that ſpecies of miracles which is the moſt laſting, and conſequently the moſt convincing to the later ages, as well as peculiarly adapted to the keeping up among a people diſpoſed, as the Jews were, to idolatry and rebellion, that conſtant dependence upon their God and King, which was neceſſary to preſerve them diſtinct and ſeparate from the reſt of the world, according to the declared purpoſe of God.—They appear to be ſometimes plain, and ſometimes metaphorical—they have often a firſt or partial, and an ultimate completion, of which the former may generally be conſidered as an earneſt of the latter—they having often an immediate reference to preſent circumſtances, or to things that were very ſoon to happen, and yet being in their nature predictive of remotely future events.—" It is this double character of Prophecy, which occaſions thoſe unexpected tranſitions and ſudden interchange of circumſtances, ſo obſervable in the prophetic books.

Hence

Hence different predictions are ſometimes blended together, temporal and ſpiritual deliverances are foretold in one Prophecy, and great and ſmaller events are combined in one point of view. Hence likewiſe one chain of connected deſign runs through the whole ſcheme of Prophecy; and a continuation of events ſucceſſively fulfilling, and ſucceſſively branching out into new predictions, continued to confirm the faith, and keep alive the expectations of the Jews." It is principally this double ſenſe of prophecy which renders it obſcure: for though "the predictions of the Prophets were ſometimes poſitive and exactly deſcriptive, and delivered with an accurate and definite deſignation of names and times, Prophecy was not generally deſigned to be clear before its accompliſhment. Had it been more clear, it muſt have controlled the freedom of human actions, or have appeared to have produced its own accompliſhment, furniſhing ſinners with a plea of neceſſity. It is however always ſufficiently exact in its deſcriptions to authenticate its pretenſions to a Divine authority, to produce, when it comes to paſs, an acknowledgement of its unerring certainty, and to demonſtrate the wiſdom and the power of God[h]."

[h] Gray's Key to the Old Teſtament, p. 343, 345.

For

For let it not be imagined that the obſcurity which ariſes from the double ſenſe of Prophecy, at all reſembles the ambiguity of the Pagan oracles. The Pagan oracles commonly related to tranſactions, that were carrying on *at the ſame time* in no very diſtant place; or to ſome event a *ſhort time* before it happened, when the cauſes which were to produce it had begun to operate: and it is certain, that they were in general ſo expreſſed, as to admit of double and even contradictory interpretations, in order to correſpond with events of a totally *oppoſite nature.* Whereas the double types of genuine Prophecy conſtantly referred to events of the *ſame nature*, though occurring at different periods of time.

It has been already ſaid, that Prophecy was ſometimes delivered in diſtinct and poſitive terms; as for example, the fifty-third chapter of Iſaiah, containing the *hiſtory* of our Saviour's ſufferings; and it may alſo be obſerved, that when it was delivered in highly metaphorical language, the ſymbols and figures admitted of the cleareſt explication, which was ſometimes given at the ſame time.—Thus for inſtance, the four great empires of the world and their revolutions

were

were repreſented to Daniel, under the form of certain animals, and by alluſions to their nature and properties; but theſe ſymbols are interpreted in the plaineſt language poſſible.

I cannot refuſe myſelf the pleaſure of cloſing this part of the ſubject, by quoting a moſt admirable deſcription of the language of Prophecy.—" The language of Prophecy is remarkable for its magnificence. Each prophetic writer is diſtinguiſhed for peculiar beauties; but their ſtyle in general may be characterized, as ſtrong, animated, and impreſſive. Its ornaments are derived not from accumulation of epithet, or laboured harmony; but from the real grandeur of its images, and the majeſtic force of its expreſſions. It is varied with ſtriking propriety, and enlivened with quick but eaſy tranſitions. Its ſudden burſts of eloquence, its earneſt warmth, its affecting exhortations and appeals, afford very intereſting proofs of that lively impreſſion, and of that inſpired conviction, under which the Prophets wrote; and which enabled them, among a people not diſtinguiſhed for genius, to ſurpaſs in every variety of compoſition the moſt admired productions of Pagan antiquity. If the imagery

employed

employed by the ſacred writers appear ſometimes to partake of a coarſe and indelicate caſt, it muſt be recollected, that the Eaſtern manners and languages required the moſt forcible repreſentations; and that the maſculine and indignant ſpirit of the Prophets led them to adopt the moſt energetic and deſcriptive expreſſions. No ſtyle is perhaps ſo highly figurative as that of the Prophets. Every object of nature and of art, which could furniſh alluſions, is explored with induſtry; every ſcene of creation, and every page of ſcience, ſeems to have unfolded its rich varieties to the ſacred writers, who, in the ſpirit of Eaſtern poetry, delight in every kind of metaphorical embelliſhment. Thus, by way of illuſtration, it is obvious to remark, that earthly dignities and powers are ſymbolized by the celeſtial bodies; the effects of moral evil are ſhown under the ſtorms and convulſions of nature; the pollutions of ſin are repreſented by external impurities; and the beneficial influence of righteouſneſs is depicted by the ſerenity and confidence of peaceful life. This allegorical language being founded in ideas univerſally prevalent, and adhered to with invariable relation and regular analogy, has furniſhed great ornament and elegance to the ſacred writings. Sometimes,

times, however, the inſpired penmen drew their alluſions from local and temporary ſources of metaphor; from the peculiar ſcenery of their country; from the idolatries of heathen nations; from their own hiſtory and circumſtances; from the ſervice of their temple, and the ceremonies of their religion; from manners that have faded, and cuſtoms that have elapſed. Hence many appropriate beauties have vaniſhed. Many deſcriptions and many repreſentations, that muſt have had a ſolemn importance among the Jews, are now conſidered, from a change of circumſtances, in a degraded point of view. Hence, likewiſe, here and there a ſhade of obſcurity. In general, however, the language of Scripture, though highly ſublime and beautiful, is eaſy and intelligible to all capacities[i]."

The courſe of Prophecy was guided by the light of previous revelation, and thus a regular connexion was preſerved, which was itſelf a teſtimony to its truth. The Prophecies taken together form a connected ſeries of the divine diſpenſations from nearly the beginning of the world to the end of time. Taken ſeparately, they preſent detached ſcenes of

[i] Gray, p. 351.

what

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what has been tranſacted, is now tranſacting, and will hereafter take place upon the great theatre of the world, as far as they relate to the concerns of true religion. Many of theſe predictions are delivered with the greateſt degree of accuracy, preciſion, and minuteneſs; and all of them reſpect one particular train of events, either directly or ultimately—many of them relate to one particular perſon, and to one only—and one particular period of time, and one only; but more contain a firſt and ſecondary reference to particular objects of a ſimilar kind, at different points of time, which, far from rendering them of vague and uncertain ſignification, more fully eſtabliſhes their title to our faith and admiration. Founded upon the baſis of eternal truth, no human device can undermine, no human effort can overturn them. The declarations of Prophecy, conſidered with reſpect to their deſign, as well as their extent, are the moſt ſublime that can be imagined—the moſt gracious for the Supreme Being to impart, and moſt beneficial for man to receive.—The ſeed of the woman is ordained to bruiſe the ſerpent's head, as ſoon as man had fallen from his original ſtate of innocence and happineſs.—Preparations are made for the Redeemer, and a more diſtinct proſpect is given

given of his perſon, office, and dignity, as the fulneſs of time for his appearance approaches; and the progreſs of his Religion—the ſufferings and triumphs of his Church—and his conqueſt over Satan, and his attendants, ſin and death, gradually extend to the confines of the world, and "finiſh the myſtery of God."—Such is the outline of the wonderful ſcheme of Prophecy! which is harmonious and complete in all its parts, and may be traced through almoſt every page of the Old and New Teſtaments.

It is ſcarcely poſſible to contemplate Prophecy as a regular ſyſtem, without perceiving its direct tendency to prove the conſtant overruling providence of God, and the truth and certainty of divine Revelation, which muſt be conſidered as its moſt important uſe.—The evidence ariſing from Prophecy is a growing evidence.—The divine deſign, uniformly purſued through a ſeries of ſucceſſive generations, opens with a greater degree of clearneſs, in proportion to the lapſe of time and the number of events.—An increaſe of age is an addition to its ſtrength; and the nearer we approach the point, towards which the diſpenſations of God unvaryingly tend, the more clearly ſhall we diſcern the wonderful regularity,

regularity, consistency, and beauty of this stupendous plan for universal good.—Of the great use of Prophecies which have been fulfilled, as a direct and strong argument to convert unbelievers to Christianity, and to establish Christians in the Faith, we have the most ample proofs. Our Lord himself made very frequent appeals to Prophecy, as evidence of his divine mission; he referred the Jews to their own Scriptures, as most fully and clearly bearing witness of himself.—Upon them he grounded the necessity of his sufferings;—upon them he settled the faith of the Disciples at Emmaus, and of the Apostles at Jerusalem. The same source supplied the eloquence of St. Peter and St. Paul, and the means with which Apollos "mightily convinced the Jews." This was a powerful instrument of persuasion in the succeeding ages of the Church, when used by the primitive apologists. Upon this topic were employed the zeal and diligence, not only of Justin Martyr, but Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine. It would never have been so frequently employed, if it had not been well adapted to the desired end: and that it did most completely answer this end, by the conversion of unbelievers, is evident from the

accounts of Scripture, and the records of the primitive Church.

Prophecy keeps the attention of Christians alive to the truth and importance of their holy Religion—to its truth, because Prophecy and Christianity had one and the same origin, both being derived from the same Fountain of perfection;—it keeps them alive to its importance, because Prophecy shews that the Supreme Being has vouchsafed through a long succession of ages to prepare mankind, by gradual revelations of his will, for future blessings; and has proved, by sending chosen messengers to usher in this final dispensation, that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of Prophecy."—It confirms the general belief of a God, and points out to a careless world the plain traces of his watchful providence.—It displays the counsels of inspiration incessantly directing the course of events, without violating the order of reason and of human action.—Such knowledge is too wonderful for us! such power is above our comprehension! But the *fact* is placed before our eyes.—We see, or may see, a regular train of Prophecies tending towards one *declared end*, accurately fulfilled and fulfilling

amidſt all the confuſion and oppoſition of this tumultuous world: and we ſee that theſe Prophecies are clear, both in prediction and accompliſhment, in proportion to their importance in fixing our belief in the providence of God, and in the great truths of divine Revelation.—Thus it appears, that the chief deſign of Prophecy is to bear conſtant witneſs to religious truth—But though to convince gainſayers of this truth, is juſtly conſidered as its principal uſe, it has another very important object, to which it well becomes us to pay attention, from motives of gratitude, as well as from fear of incurring the blame, which Scripture invariably imputes to thoſe who neglect to take advantage of the light afforded them.—It is deſigned to protect believers in the word of God from the dangers ariſing from the prevalent corruptions, errors, and vices of the age in which they live.—The due conſideration of Prophecy will adminiſter conſolation amidſt preſent diſtreſs, and enliven faith and elevate hope, whilſt paſſing through thoſe dark depreſſing ſcenes, which, without this gracious aid, might lead through the intricacies of doubt to the gloom of deſpair.

That prophecy was intended to be a particular guard to the Church in these latter days, as well as a general light to the world, we have, I think, abundant evidence: but as this view of the subject relates more particularly to the Second Part of this work, I shall only now observe, that we have the authority of our Lord himself to consider it as a duty to study the Prophecies, with a view to present and to future times; as well as for the purpose of confirming our faith by a retrospect of the past.—Our Saviour reproved his Disciples and the Jews for "not discerning the signs of the times" then present—commanded them to "search the Scriptures" for information concerning them, and to "watch" for the events which should fulfil the divine predictions.—He guarded his disciples from sharing in the impending distresses of their country, by express declarations concerning the *time* and *nature* of that day of vengeance, which they fully understood, and therefore avoided the danger—and he directed St. John to warn all succeeding generations of the trials to which his Church was to be subjected in the different ages of the world.

This

This Chapter has run to a greater length than could have been wiſhed: but it is hoped that the importance of its object will be a ſufficient juſtification; and I ſhall conclude it with reminding the reader, that the Prophecies, which will come under our conſideration, are of that kind which may be called *direct*.—They relate immediately to particular perſons, events, or revolutions; and cannot, without the moſt evident perverſion of meaning, be underſtood in any other ſenſe, or be explained in any other manner, than what is applicable to thoſe events, perſons, and revolutions, to which they have been conſtantly referred for their firſt and ſecondary accompliſhment.

FIRST CLASS OF THE PROPHECIES, WHICH FORM THE SUBJECT OF THIS WORK.

PROPHECIES WHICH HAVE BEEN FULFILLED, —DOWN TO THE SUBVERSION OF THE JEWISH GOVERNMENT.

I. The Promiſe made to Adam,—conſidered as a Prophecy of general ſalvation by the Meſſiah, the Saviour of the world.

II. The Promiſe to Abraham of a numerous poſterity from his ſon Iſaac, who were to become a great nation, diſtinguiſhed from the reſt of the world by their religious polity, and to be the appointed guardians of the promiſes of God, till the appearance of the Meſſiah; who was to be born of the race of Iſaac, and in whom all the nations of the earth were to be bleſſed.

III. The promiſe of *another* Lawgiver made at the eſtabliſhment of the *particular* diſpenſation of the Law by Moſes:—conſidered as a renewal of the promiſe of *general* ſalvation.

IV. The

IV. The Promiſes and Threats made by Moſes to the Iſraelites, in caſe of obedience or diſobedience to the divine Law,—conſidered as proving the conſtant ſuperintending care of God over a people ſeparated from the reſt of the world, for the expreſs purpoſe of preſerving the knowledge of himſelf, and of his gracious intentions towards mankind.

V. The appointment of Cyrus to be the deliverer of the Jews, and the reſtorer of the Temple and City,—conſidered as deſigned to prove, that the captivity of the Jews was by the eſpecial direction of the Almighty—intended as a puniſhment for their idolatry, to continue only for a definite term of years; as they were deſtined to preſerve the promiſes, and remain as a ſeparate nation in their own land, till the coming of the Meſſiah.

VI. The deſtruction and deſolate ſtate of Babylon, compared with the denunciation of the Prophets during the time of its greateſt ſplendour—conſidered as an awful example of the judgments of God upon the enemies of his people.

VII. The preciſe time fixed for the accompliſhment of the promiſe of the Meſſiah pre-

dicted by Daniel 537 years before his birth, so very distinctly as to awaken a general expectation of his arrival, not only among the Jews, but all over the East, where a tradition prevailed relative to the appearance of some great personage, about the time of the advent of our Lord.

VIII. The Promise of John the Baptist, the messenger or forerunner of the Messiah, given 400 years before his birth, being the last prediction of the last of the series of Prophets under the Mosaic dispensation.

IX. The Prophetic description of the Birth, Character, Mission, Sufferings, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of the Messiah, compared with his History, written by the Evangelists after his Ascension into heaven.

X. The destruction of the City and Temple of Jerusalem,—the dispersion of the Jewish people,—the total subversion of the Jewish government, religious and civil, foretold by Christ as to happen immediately *after* the establishment of the Christian religion, and having happened exactly according to his prediction—considered as the consequence of their rejection of the Lawgiver promised

by

by Moſes, and therefore as proving him to be the promiſed Meſſiah expected by the Jews; —and the publication of the Goſpel to the Gentiles previous to the deſtruction of the Jewiſh polity, conſidered as proving Jeſus to be the Meſſiah, "in whom all the nations of the earth were to be bleſſed."

SECOND CLASS.

PROPHECIES RELATING TO THE REIGN OF ANTICHRIST, AND THE REIGN AND FINAL TRIUMPH OF THE MESSIAH.

I. Prophecies concerning the eſtabliſhment of the Papal Power, or Popery,—conſidered as the ſcourge of the Weſtern Churches, in conſequence of the corruptions of the Religion of Chriſt,—and as one branch of Antichriſt.

II. Prophecies concerning the eſtabliſhment of the Mahometan Power, or Mahometaniſm,—conſidered as the ſcourge of the Eaſtern Churches, in conſequence of the corruptions of the Religion of Chriſt,—and as another branch of Antichriſt.

III. Prophecies concerning Infidelity,—conſidered as particularly prevalent in the laſt and

and prefent centuries,—as a third branch of Antichrift, and as a rifing power which has already made great progrefs in its work, as the fcourge of Popery, or the Church of Rome, has effected a confiderable change among the followers of Mahomet, and has enticed a multitude of Proteftants to enlift under its banners.

IV. Prophecies concerning the general diffufion of the Gofpel—the converfion of the Jews—the final triumph of our Lord, and the univerfal happinefs of his glorious reign, —confidered as the accomplifhment of the original promife made to Adam,—as the ultimate meaning of the prophetic defcriptions of the kingdom of the Meffiah, and as tending to reconcile the different opinions of Jews and Chriftians upon this fubject.

CLASS

CLASS I.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

The Promise made to Adam after the Fall—considered as a Prophecy of general Salvation by the Messiah, the Redeemer of the World.

As it is the fashion of the present day, to question the truth of the narrative of which this Prophecy forms a part, I must entreat the reader to place the weight of historic evidence against the force of ridicule, before he thinks himself at liberty to reject it as false.—Without any reference to the authority of inspiration for support, he will find the testimony of all antiquity more than a balance for the cavils of modern scepticism. If it were within the limits of this work, it would be easy to prove, that the earliest annals of the remotest ages—the various systems of theology among the most antient nations—the voice

voice of tradition, and the writings of philosophy, confirm the Mosaic history of the fall of man, the antiquity of sacrifices, the flood, and the general dispersion of mankind, beyond the possibility of doubt.—And if the *truth* of this narrative can be thus established by an impartial examination of such unconnected evidence, it can scarcely remain a question in the mind of any one, who considers the *impossibility* that Moses should obtain the knowledge of these facts by any human means, and their singular agreement with the principles of the Christian Religion—whether this narrative was written by inspiration?—I may therefore consider the Divine authority of this narration, as standing firm upon a mass of external and internal evidence, the combined strength of which has never yet been shaken; whatever may be the assertions of ignorance or enmity, or however plausibly the misrepresentations of some of the *parts* may seem to contradict its claim to our belief.

Notwithstanding the obscurity which hangs over these first pages of the Mosaic history, the great truths, which it concerns us to know, are clearly discernible. We may plainly see, that God had revealed himself to Adam by actual

actual communications, previous to the forfeiture of his happiness. The blessing pronounced, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it[a]"—the authority given, "Have dominion over the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the air, and over every thing that moveth upon the earth"—the *single* prohibition, "Of every tree in the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it"—and the awful denunciation of punishment in case of disobedience, "In the day that thou eatest, thou shalt surely die," sufficiently prove, that Adam was clearly informed of the existence of God, *from* whom himself and all things had received their being, and *to* whom himself and all things were consequently subject; and thus was furnished with the best guide and support to reason, and the strongest defence against the power of temptation.

This important truth, which is confirmed by the whole tenor of Scripture, and of early history, at once vindicates the justice and goodness of God, and displays the heinous nature of man's transgression. It teaches us

[a] Gen. ch. ii.

to

to consider the *declared will of God*, as the most solid foundation of *moral virtue*; for if, in his original state of innocence and perfection, man was not trusted to the dictates of deductions of his reason, it surely looks like extreme folly to build in this our fallen state upon the weak, uncertain ground of *general expediency*.—And when we are assured, that God manifested himself *as God* to the first of the human race, before guilt had corrupted his nature, and perverted his reason: we may assert, that this original Revelation of God to man, of his own existence, and of the relation, in which man stands to God, is also the foundation of all *religion*.—By thus deriving our knowledge of the Deity *immediately* from the Deity himself—not only through the medium of his works, of which men know so little, and judge so ill—and tracing our knowledge of the divine will through a *series* of *consistent* prophecies, and instructions, and records; Faith, Reason, and History will unite to form that "triple cord, which shall never be broken" from the anchor of our Christian hope.—But I proceed to observe, that Adam confessed both his *knowledge* of the voice of God, when the consciousness of guilt made him try to avoid his presence, and his *fear* of the punishment, which had been *previously* threat-

threatened, when he said, "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid." The intercourse therefore, which God had vouchsafed to hold with Adam in his state of innocence, and the *change*, which he experienced in himself on transgressing the command, enabled him to judge perfectly of the Divine authority of that gracious promise of final Redemption, which began the wonderful scheme of Prophecy, and founded the hope of immortality upon the basis of Revelation.

And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel[b].—

The language of this Prophecy is metaphorical; but the metaphors used in it are by no means of uncertain signification[c].—Taking the whole account of the fall, as it stands recorded in Scripture, it is clear that Satan, or the Evil Spirit, who assumed the form of a

[b] Gen. iii. 14, 15.

[c] Sherlock on the Prophecies, Dis. III.

serpent,

serpent[d], was the original cause of all the guilt and misery of man. "And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." Immediately, therefore, does the justice of God pronounce his doom[e]. The seed of the woman whom he had tempted to disobedience, was to be instrumental in executing his punishment—a punishment far more severe than that, which disobedience had brought upon mankind.—*Because thou hast done this,—I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*—Thus "in the midst of wrath, remembering mercy," God was pleased to communicate to our first parents, in the sentence pronounced upon their enemy, such a

[d] St. Paul declares it was the purpose of the Gospel of Christ "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." Acts xxvi. 18. and in his Epistle to the Romans xvi. 20. he refers to the promise made to Adam, "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." The same Apostle, 2 Cor. xi. 14. favours the interpretation of Patrick (see his Commentary on the third chapter of Genesis, proving the word *saraph* to mean both a *serpent* and an *angel*), "And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light"—Eve might be thus "beguiled" by him, who was "a liar from the beginning."

[e] B. C. 4004.

promise

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promiſe as would mitigate the impending horrors of their own.—When they heard that the ſucceſs of their adverſary was not a complete victory over themſelves, or their poſterity; but that although there was to be a conteſt for ſuperiority, their poſterity ſhould finally prevail, ſome hope of reſtoration to the loſt favour of their Creator muſt have penetrated the gloom of deſpair.—They had exchanged happineſs, innocence, and life, for pain and ſorrow, ſin and death. But this Prophecy, while it opened the proſpect of deliverance from "the power of Satan, and of ſin," encouraged them to place their truſt and confidence in God, who could alone effect it—it was at once an earneſt of pardon, and a motive for exertion in their appointed warfare—it was the foundation of hope and gratitude—the incentive to penitence and obedience.

Thus the light of Prophecy was proportioned to the wants of our firſt parents, and was tranſmitted by them to their children, as a ſacred treaſure of conſolation amidſt the miſeries, which their ſin had entailed upon them, and as a ſecurity for the maintenance of religion, on which their future happineſs depended.

pended.—By what methods God intended to effect this wonderful restoration to his favour, he did not at that time reveal[f]. This was the

[f] Eve seems to have expected her first-born son would be the *promised seed*—the *Redeemer from death*, and the *Restorer of happiness*—the *Messiah*. She called him *Cain*—signifying *acquisition*, saying, "I have gotten a man from the Lord," according to his promise. No reason is given for the name of Abel, because his parents did not place in him their hope of the promised seed, as they did in their first-born Cain; but to the son born after the death of Abel, and the rejection and banishment of Cain, Eve gave the name of *Seth*, signifying *appointed*; as she considered this son as *substituted* by God, to be the seed himself, or the seed from whom the promised Saviour of the world should come; for, whether the promise was to be fulfilled immediately, or at a remote distance of time, they were not informed by the Prophecy, nor was this declared for many succeeding generations. Lamech called the name of his son *Noah*, which signifies *rest*, or *refreshment after toil*, or *comfort*; "Because," said he, "this same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands." It is to be observed, that there was a general curse upon the earth for the sin of Adam, and some have thought a particular curse upon some part of it for the sin of Cain. Lamech foretells, that in the time of this son God would in great measure take them both off—that he should be the restorer of the world, after the flood predicted by Enoch (Enoch had named his son Methu—*he dies*—selah—*the sending forth of water*, signifying, *when he dies, the flood shall come*. See Bochart, l. ii. c. 13.)—that he should give *rest* from confusion and desolation, and that the earth should be blessed to his posterity.—Lamech therefore, with the prospect of these mighty changes before

the subject of subsequent Prophecies, delivered with progressive clearness, and more circumstantial detail. This, as well as all the series which followed, found its completion when the Son of God appeared "to destroy the works of the Devil," when "the head of the serpent was bruised" by the conquest of the powers of darkness, and the redemption of the world was effected by the sufferings of Christ; and when He, who was in the most proper and eminent sense "the seed of the woman," not only withstood the temptations of Satan, but "cast out his evil spirits, and saw him as lightning fall

fore him, might look to this son for the *completion* of the promise made to Adam, or he might foresee that *from him* the promised deliverer should proceed; but that *a deliverer* from the miseries, which sin had brought upon the earth, was *expected*, appears very evident. It is perfectly consistent with the merciful dispensations of God's providence, to suppose that these early Patriarchs, who seem to have suffered great hardships from the curse upon the ground, were permitted to indulge the hope of a speedy accomplishment of this promise; God having been pleased to take Enoch to himself, about fifty-seven years after the death of Adam, to support and comfort mankind in their state of mortality, with the assurance of a better life in another world. And it is therefore probable, that Enoch was translated in some such visible manner as Elijah afterwards was, by a glorious appearance of the *Shechinah*, or *token of God's special presence*, from whence angels were sent to convey him up to heaven. See Patrick's Commentary.

from heaven." Thus, as the guilt of Adam was transmitted to all his race, so was this most antient of the Prophecies, the harbinger of that atonement, which was to be made for it "when the fulness of time was come," and "God sent into the world his Son made of a woman;" that "as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one many were made righteous;" and that "as in Adam all die, so in Christ all might be made alive."

That this commonly received interpretation is undoubtedly the true and antient interpretation of the Jewish Church before the coming of Christ, is clear from their commentaries on this part of Scripture. They referred the fulfilment of this promise to Christ and to Satan, as plainly appears by the Targum of Onkelos, and the Targum of Jerusalem[s]. In the

[s] Targum is a Chaldee word, and signifies a translation. It is in general appropriated by the Jews to the Chaldee paraphrases of the Old Testament. The first Targums were composed for the use of the common people, after their return from the Babylonish captivity. The Targum of Onkelos on the Pentateuch is the most antient now remaining. It is rather a translation than a paraphrase. It was antiently held in such high repute as to be read alternately in the synagogues with the sacred text. Next in

the latter the paraphrase of the words addressed to the serpent is exactly as follows. "It shall come to pass, when the sons of the woman shall execute the commands of the Law, then they shall wound thee in the head, and slay thee. But when the sons of the woman shall desert the commands of the Law, thou shalt bite them in the heel, and strike them in their weakness. There shall, however, be a remedy for the sons of the woman; but for thee, the serpent, there shall be none. It shall come to pass that they shall wound each other in the heel, in the last days, in the days of Messiah the king[h]."

in purity of style and antiquity is the Targum of Jonathan Ben Uzziel. It relates to the works of the Prophets. These Targums are allowed both by Jews and Christians to be as antient, if not more so, than the time of our Saviour. It is probable, that many of the glosses and interpretations of the more antient Versions, that were in use immediately after the Babylonish captivity, are inserted in them. Many other Prophecies, in addition to those above mentioned concerning the Messiah, are explained in these Targums, exactly as they are by Christians. In addition to the service which they render so evidently to the Christian cause, they are of great use, as they contribute to establish the genuineness of the Hebrew text. This subject is treated at large by Prideaux, vol. ii. p. 413, 426, &c.

[h] Critici Sacri, tom. i. p. 79.

In the sentence, pronounced by the God of infinite justice and mercy upon our first parents, we see the groundwork and basis of all the Prophecies. It is the foundation of the glorious hope, in the fulfilment of which, every descendant of Adam has the strongest interest. It was the first gracious intimation of peace and deliverance, of redemption and happiness, given to fallen and miserable man —the earliest ray of "the Sun of righteousness" which in the last days illumined a guilty race, and spread its light over the world.

CLASS

CLASS I.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

The Promises made to Abraham respecting his Posterity and the Messiah.

ABRAHAM, it is well known, was the most distinguished of the Patriarchs, the venerable ancestor of the Israelites, and Ismaelites, or, as they are now called, of the Jews and Arabs[a]. His name is at this day celebrated throughout the East; and various writings and traditions, carefully preserved through the long lines of his posterity, confirm and illustrate the history, which we find recorded of him in the Old Testament. From this history, every part of which is interesting, and almost every circumstance prophetic, I have selected one of the most striking examples of the truth of prophecy, still open to the eyes of man, and

[a] Y. W. 2083. B. C. 1921.

which is alſo an important link in the chain of evidence, to prove its great deſign.

Abraham was the tenth in regular deſcent from Noah, through Shem, to whom the divine promiſe of peculiar protection and bleſſing had been given, apparently as the reward of filial piety, and in whoſe family the worſhip of the true God was preſerved, amidſt the idolatry of the other deſcendants of Noah [b]. At the eſpecial call of the Almighty, Abraham left his native country Ur of the Chaldeans, in Meſopotamia, then beginning to be infected by idolatry. And it was in conſequence of his faith in God, and ready obedience to his commands, that he was favoured with the promiſes we are now to conſider.

[b] Upon the remarkable prophecy concerning Shem, Ham, and Japhet, Gen. ix. the learned Joſeph Mede obſerves, Book I. Diſ. xlviii. "that there never yet hath been a ſon of Cham, who hath ſhaken a ſceptre over the head of Japhet. Sem hath ſubdued Japhet, and Japhet hath ſubdued Sem, but Cham never ſubdued either. And this fate was it, which made Hannibal, a child of Canaan, cry out with the amazement of his ſoul, I acknowledge the fate of Carthage." (See Livy, lib. xxvii. in fine.) In the Hebrew language Shem ſignifies *renowned*, Japhet *enlarged*, and Canaan *abject*, or *humbled*.

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As this Prophecy forms, as it were, the grand outline of the building, the foundation of which we have examined in the former Chapter, I ſhall endeavour to draw it out diſtinctly, for the inſpection of the reader, before his attention is called to the circumſtances of its completion.

"Now the Lord had ſaid unto Abram [before the death of his father Terah] Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's houſe, *unto a land that I will ſhew thee: and I will make thee a great nation, and I will bleſs thee, and make thy name great; and thou ſhalt be a bleſſing; and I will bleſs them that bleſs thee, and curſe him that curſeth thee; and in thee ſhall all the families of the earth be bleſſed.* So Abram departed, as the Lord had ſpoken unto him; and Abram was 75 years old when he departed out of Haran, where Terah his father died[e]."—Upon his firſt entering Canaan, "the Lord appeared unto Abram, and ſaid, unto thy ſeed will I give *this land.*" Some time after his return from Egypt, whither he had been led by a famine in the land of Canaan, with which he muſt by that time

[e] Geneſis xii. 1—4.

have

have been well acquainted, having passed through it from north to south, "the Lord said unto Abraham, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art [probably the mountain on the east of Bethel, where he had pitched his tent, before he went into Egypt, and had built an altar unto the Lord] northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: *for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and unto thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.* Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it [fearless of danger from its inhabitants]: for I will give it unto thee[d]."—These promises were repeated after the victory obtained by Abraham over the Kings, and his refusal of the spoil offered him by "Melchisedeck the King of Salem, and Priest of the most high God." The time of the captivity in Egypt was exactly predicted; the limits of the land they were afterwards to possess, were exactly determined; and the nations they were to destroy, were enumerated. "*Know of a surety, that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that*

[d] Genesis xiii. 14—17.

is

is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them 400 years: and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge, and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. *But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.—Unto thy seed will I give this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates. The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites*[e]." Abraham had as yet no son to inherit these promises; but his faith in the word of God remained unshaken. When he was 99 years old [13 years after the birth of Ishmael] "the Lord appeared again unto him, and said unto him: I am the Almighty God: walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.—*Behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.* Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram; but thy name shall be Abra-

[e] Genesis xv. 13—21.

ham:

ham: for a father of many nations have I made thee. *And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and Kings ſhall come out of thee. And I will eſtabliſh my covenant between me and thee, and thy ſeed after thee, in their generations, for an everlaſting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy ſeed after thee.* And I will give unto thee, and to thy ſeed after thee, the land wherein thou art a ſtranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlaſting poſſeſſion, and I will be *their God.*—Sarah thy wife ſhall bear thee a ſon indeed[f]; and thou ſhalt call his name Iſaac: *and I will eſtabliſh my covenant with him, for an everlaſting covenant, and with his ſeed after him.* And as for Iſhmael, I have heard thee; *Behold I have bleſſed him—and will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I eſtabliſh with Iſaac,* whom Sarah thy wife ſhall bear unto thee, at this ſet time

[f] In the early part of the hiſtory the ſacred writer informs us, that "Sarah was barren, ſhe had no child."—The expreſſion implies that ſhe laboured under ſome natural defect. Both Abraham and Sarah were far advanced in age, when this promiſe was given; ſo that the birth of Iſaac is repreſented in Scripture as a miraculous event.—"The Lord viſited Sarah as he had ſaid—ſhe bore Abraham a ſon—and Abraham was one hundred years old, when his ſon Iſaac was born." Gen. xvii. and xxi.

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in the next year [g]. And when Abraham, ſoon after the birth of Iſaac, was heſitating whether he ſhould comply with the requeſt of Sarah, to ſend Iſhmael away, "the Lord ſaid unto Abraham—hearken unto her voice, for in Iſaac ſhall thy ſeed be called;" accompanying this command with an aſſurance of protection and bleſſing to his ſon Iſhmael.—When it had pleaſed God to afford Abraham an opportunity of exhibiting the moſt eminent example of faith and obedience we can imagine in the power of man [h], theſe promiſes were renewed with yet greater ſolemnity, and more ſtriking marks of approbation and favour. "By myſelf have I ſworn, ſaith the Lord; for becauſe thou haſt done this thing, and haſt not withheld thy ſon, thine only ſon; that in bleſſing I will bleſs thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy ſeed as the ſtars of the heaven, and as the ſand which is upon the ſea-ſhore, and thy ſeed ſhall poſſeſs the gate of his enemies. *And in thy ſeed ſhall all*

[g] Geneſis xvii. 1—21.

[h] Abraham's trial may be ſuppoſed to be prophetic, even in the words, "God will provide for himſelf a victim." Our Lord declares, "Abraham rejoiced to ſee my day, and he ſaw it, and was glad." John viii. 56.

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the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice[1]."

Little need be said in explanation of this prophecy.——A numerous posterity to Abraham—a separation of the descendants of Isaac from the rest of the world—a preservation of the worship of the true God among this selected people—peculiar protection, direction, and blessing to be vouchsafed to them from "*their God*" for ever, and the glorious privilege of giving birth to the Saviour of the world, are clearly predicted.—These promises were renewed to Isaac after the death of Abraham, and to Jacob after he had obtained the blessing from his father Isaac, to which his brother Esau's unworthy resignation of his birthright had given him a claim; and they were certainly understood by these Patriarchs, as confirming the tradition they had received from their fathers, of the restoration of universal happiness, at some future period.

We are now to look for the fulfilment of this comprehensive Prophecy.—And here we

[1] Genesis xxii. 16—18.

may venture to appeal to every one at all acquainted with the subsequent history of the children of Abraham, whether his mind has not already recognized that history in these predictions? The value of such involuntary testimony to the truth and exactness of Prophecy is obvious; and if it be farther observed, that every succeeding prediction has its place in filling up this wonderful sketch of the Divine design, the strength, the harmony, and beauty of the whole, must irresistibly convince us, that it *is the work of God.*

In the histories of the Arabs, and of the Jews, we find ample proof in every age, that the promise of a numerous posterity to Abraham has been most wonderfully fulfilled.

As most satisfactory evidence concerning the *Ishmaelitish* race of his descendants, I shall cite a very extraordinary passage from an historian, whose enmity to the cause of religion has led him to assert in one sentence, what the power of truth obliged him to absolutely deny in the next. His concessions as to *facts*, anxiously as he endeavours to ward off their effect upon every candid mind, by the supposition of causes wholly inadequate to account for

for them, sufficiently establish the *multitude*, the *antiquity*, and the *character* of this *literally* singular people—their *uninterrupted independence*, and their *unchanging manners*. And thus the truth and accuracy of this descriptive[k] Prophecy is confirmed by the involuntary testimony of one of the most artful opponents to the truth of Revelation.

The *doubt* he has expressed relative to their *origin* is undeserving notice, as it is unsupported by argument or authority; but the reader who is inclined to examine this point, and to enter more fully into the subject of this Prophecy, will find it clearly and concisely stated by many writers, and particularly by Bishop Newton.

[l] "The perpetual independence of the Arabs has been the theme of praise among strangers and natives; and the arts of controversy transform this singular event into a prophecy and a miracle, in favour of the posterity of Ismael. Some exceptions, that can neither be dissembled nor eluded, render this mode of reasoning as indiscreet as it is superfluous:

[k] Genesis xii. 16.

[l] Gibbon's Roman History, vol. v. chap. 50. p. 178—194.

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the kingdom of Yemen has been successively subdued by the Abyssinians, the Persians, the Sultans of Egypt[m], and the Turks[n]: the holy cities of Mecca and Medina have repeatedly bowed under a Scythian tyrant; and the Roman province of Arabia[o] embraced the pe-

[m] "It was subdued A. D. 1173, by a brother of the great Saladin, who founded a dynasty of Curds or Ayoubites. See Guigne's Histoire des Huns, Tom. 1. p. 425. D'Herbelot, p. 477."

[n] "By the lieutenant of Solyman I. A. D. 1538. and Selim II. 1568. See Cantemir's Hist. of the Othman Empire, p. 201—221. The pasha who resided at Saana commanded twenty-one beys, but *no revenue was ever remitted to the Porte*, and the Turks were expelled about the year 1630. Niebuhr, p. 167, 168."

[o] "Of the Roman province under the name of Arabia, and the third Palestine, the principal cities were Bostra and Petra, which dated their era from the year 105, when they were subdued by Palma, a lieutenant of Trajan. Dion Cassius, l. 68. Petra was the capital of the Nabathæans; whose name is derived from the eldest of the sons of Ismael. (Genes. xxv. 12, &c. with the Commentaries of Jerom, Le Clerc, and Calmet.) Justinian relinquished a palm country of ten days journey to the south of Ælah (Procop. de Bell. Persic. l. i. c. 19.) and the Romans maintained a centurion and a custom-house (Arian in Periplo Maris Erythræi, p. 11. in Hudson tom. i.) at a place (λευκη Κωμη, pagus albus Hawara) in the territory of Medina. (D'Anville Memoire sur l'Egypte, p. 243.) *These real possessions and some naval inroads of Trajan*, (Peripl. p. 14, 15.) *are magnified by history and medals into the Roman conquest of Arabia.*" Gibbon's Notes to the Decline and Fall, &c.—vol. v. p. 179.

culiar wilderness, in which Ismael and his sons must have pitched their tents, in the face of their brethren.

Yet these exceptions are temporary and local; the body of the nation has escaped the yoke of the most powerful monarchies: the arms of Sesostris and Cyrus, of Pompey and Trajan, could never achieve the conquest of Arabia; the present Sovereign of the Turks may exercise the shadow of jurisdiction, but his pride is reduced to solicit the friendship of a people, whom it is dangerous to provoke, and fruitless to attack. The obvious causes of their freedom are inscribed on the character and country of the Arabs—Their spirit is free, their steps are unconfined, the desert is open, and the tribes and families are held together by a mutual and voluntary compact—The separation of the Arabs from the rest of mankind has accustomed them to confound the ideas of stranger and enemy—They pretend, that in the division of the earth, the rich and fertile climates were assigned to the other branches of the human family, and that the posterity of the outlaw Ismael might recover, by fraud or force, the portion of inheritance, of which he had been unjustly deprived. According to Pliny, the Arabian tribes are equally addicted to theft and merchandize: the cara-

vans

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vans that traverse the desert are ransomed or pillaged: and their neighbours, since the remote times of Job and Sesostris, have been victims of their rapacious spirit—Whatever may be the pedigree of the Arabs, their language is derived from the original stock with the Hebrew, the Syriac, and Chaldean tongues—The same hospitality, which was practised by Abraham, and celebrated by Homer, is still renewed in the camps of the Arabs—The religion of the Arabs as well as of the Indians, consisted in the worship of the sun, the moon, and stars. —In a remote period of antiquity, Sabianism was diffused over Asia, by *the science of the Chaldeans,* and the arms of the Assyrians.—*In the tradition of the creation, the deluge, and the patriarchs, they held a singular agreement with their Jewish captives.—They appealed to the secret books of Adam, Seth, and Enoch.—From Japan to Peru, the use of sacrifice has universally prevailed*[p].—*The life of a man is the*

[p] There can hardly be a doubt that sacrifices were instituted by the direction of God himself. It cannot be supposed that Adam or Abel would have *presumed* to *kill* any creature, or could suppose the offering such a victim, or the shedding of blood (death being their allotted punishment, and what they must hold in abhorrence) would be acceptable to God, unless such a sacrifice had been specially appointed. It is not impossible from the Apostle's expression,

the moſt precious oblation to deprecate a public calamity; the altars of Phenicia and Egypt, of Rome and Carthage, have been polluted with human gore.—*The cruel practice was long preſerved among the Arabs.*—In the time of ignorance, the Arabs, like the Jews and Egyptians, abſtained from the uſe of ſwine's fleſh; they circumciſed their children at the age of puberty[q]; *the ſame cuſtoms, without the cenſure or the preceſt of the Koran, have been ſilently tranſmitted to their poſterity and proſelytes.*"

The diſtinguiſhed poſterity of Iſaac, the child of promiſe, exhibits a yet more ſtriking

Heb. xi. 4. "Abel's ſacrifice was made acceptable by faith;" that the deſign of this inſtitution, and the neceſſity of the ſacrifice, which was to redeem the world, was revealed at the ſame time; and this conjecture is ſtrengthened by the ſimilar tradition, which is proved, by the recently diſcovered Sanſcreet writings, to have exiſted in the Eaſt, in India, in times coeval, if not prior, to the time of Moſes. God teſtified his acceptance of the ſacrifice, by fire from heaven, or (as is more probable during the times of the conſtant, or ſtated appearance of the Shechinah, or divine ſplendor of light, by which God manifeſted his eſpecial preſence) by a ſtream of flame from the viſible glory of the Lord, which burnt up the ſacrifice. See Patrick's Commentary upon Geneſis, vol. i. c. iv.

[q] Iſmael was circumciſed at this age.

example

example of the accurate fulfilment of this Prophecy, Jacob removed into Egypt with 66 persons: When Moses gave an account of the condition of the Israelites in Egypt, he declared, that after the death of Joseph "they were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed mighty, and the land was filled with them." At their departure from Egypt they amounted to 600,000 men able to bear arms, exclusive of old men, women, and children, so that the whole number may be computed at two millions[r]. During their journey to the promised land, Balaam the Prophet exclaimed, when summoned to a high place by Balak, "to curse him a people, who covered the face of the earth" 39 years after their departure from Egypt, "Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel?" And Moses, remarking their increase with a reference to the promise made to Abraham, said, addressing himself to the people on a subsequent occasion, "Behold, you are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude."

When David in the pride of his heart numbered his people, his subjects fit to bear arms

[r] See Patrick's Commentary.

and very widely different from every other people upon the face of the globe, in person, manners, laws, and religion.

The third point in the Prophecy, that "the worship of the true God should be preserved among this selected people," is necessarily connected with the fourth, relating to "the peculiar protection, direction, and blessing to be vouchsafed to them from their God," and I shall briefly consider them together.—It is well known, not only from Scripture, but from the testimonies of Josephus, Cheremon, Manetho, and Sanchoniathon, that the reason assigned by the Hebrews to Pharaoh for their request to go three days journey into the wilderness, was, that they might worship the Lord their God—the God of their fathers—That soon after they had been rescued from their Egyptian bondage by a series of miracles, Moses established the law "with signs and wonders, and mighty deeds," which directs, even to the minutest circumstances, their civil polity, religious worship, and private conduct; and promises conditional blessings and threatens conditional punishments to obedience and disobedience, which, as we shall find hereafter, were invariably performed—That this people drove out the inhabit-

ants

ants of the land of Canaan (who had then filled up the measure of their iniquities) with signal marks of supernatural power, and continued there under signal marks of supernatural protection, till their sins exiled them for 70 years to Babylon—That there was a succession of Prophets from Moses to Malachi, who maintained the worship of the true God among a part of the nation, even when most addicted to idolatry, and foretold events *near* as well as *remote*, to prove the authenticity of their mission, and recall the infatuated people to the worship of the Lord Jehovah—and that since their return from the Babylonish captivity, this people, prone, as they had ever been before, to worship the Gods of the heathen, have never once departed from the worship of "*their God*," and the observance of *their law*.—Now considering the visible tokens of the Divine presence and protection, with which they were favoured, previous to the captivity, and that these were in a great measure withdrawn after the building of the second temple, which had neither the cloud and glory that overshadowed the Ark, nor the Urim and Thummim, by which the High Priest received an answer from God to the enquiries he was authorized to make, and that "no Prophet arose in Israel" for 400 years,

i. e.

i. e. from Malachi to John the Baptist; considering too the difference of national circumstances, every thing in one case tending to preserve them in their own land, apart from every other people; and in the other, every thing tending to mingle them, as slaves, outcasts, and traders, with the nations who have conquered them, and among whom they have dwelt and suffered since their general dispersion;—the former prevalence of idolatry, and the latter inflexible adherence to their law, equally contradict all our notions of probability arising from human experience.

Where then shall we seek for an explanation of this uniform, this wonderful singularity of fate and character? It is written in this promise, "IN THY SEED SHALL ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED." To this people was assigned, as we have seen, the glorious privilege of giving birth to the Saviour of the world; and I trust the evidence, which will be produced as we proceed in this work, will indubitably prove, that this Prophecy was clearly accomplished in the birth of Jesus of Nazareth—the Christ—the Son of God—whose name be blessed for ever!

With

With respect to the continuance of this wonderful distinction from the birth of the Messiah to the present hour, we must look to succeeding Prophets for as clear an explanation as we can obtain from them, relative to events which are not yet fulfilled. The everlasting covenant which God was pleased to make with Abraham and to his seed for ever, to be their God, and to give them the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, would sufficiently account for this continued separation from the rest of the world; and this marked distinction might be considered as a sufficient pledge of the future accomplishment of this and other prophecies, relative to the return of the Jews to their own land. But we are authorized to believe, that they are thus preserved to be yet further instrumental to the execution of the great design of universal salvation. And thus will this Prophecy appear to extend the peculiar covenant with the children of Abraham, to the final developement of the mysteries of God, concerning the present world. The consideration of this point must however be deferred to the second part of this work.

CLASS

CLASS I.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

The Promise given by Moses of another Lawgiver.

THE Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken[a]. *According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb, in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God; neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well said that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak*

[a] Y. W. 2513. B. C. 1491.

unto

unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him[b].

It is supposed by some learned Christians, and by the Rabbis of the later ages, that Moses in these words intended to presignify the whole succession of Prophets, who after him arose among the Jews. The antient Jewish church understood the expressions at the conclusion of the Book of Deuteronomy, "And there arose not a Prophet like unto Moses," as immediately referring to the Messiah. Indeed this opinion was so firmly established, that we find the learned Joses and Akiba, two eminent Doctors of the Law, who flourished in the reign of the Emperor Adrian, expressly asserted, "that a Prophet like unto Moses, or one greater, must at some time arise; and that Messiah the King will be like unto him, or greater than he was[c]." The former of these interpretations is not however inconsistent with the latter. The Prophecy *may* in its first and general sense point out a succession of Prophets, though in its principal

[b] Deut. xviii. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19.

[c] Chandler's Defence of Christianity, p. 307.

and ultimate sense it points to the Messiah. But as *one* individual Prophet is clearly mentioned in the original Hebrew text, and as the constant interpretation of the early Jewish church refers the accomplishment of this Prophecy to the appearance of the Messiah, we might, I think, rest satisfied that *this* is the true meaning of the promise, if we had no other authority; and the evidence in favour of this interpretation will surely appear incontrovertible, when we further consider the particular, close, and striking resemblance, which subsists between Moses and Christ. St. Stephen and St. Peter declared that Jesus Christ was the Prophet foretold by Moses; and our Lord himself appears to have had the passage before mentioned in view, when he said, "If ye had believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me."

The resemblance between Moses and Christ is so very strong, that it is impossible to consider it fairly and carefully, without acknowledging that he must be *foretold*, where he is so well *described*.

The first great point of resemblance is, Moses was a Lawgiver, and the mediator of a covenant between God and man: Christ was

was the mediator of a better covenant than that which was eſtabliſhed by the ſacrifice of bulls and goats. The one was mortal, the other divine; the one performed a mediatorial office that was temporary and tranſient; the other "ever liveth to make interceſſion for us." Other Prophets were only interpreters and enforcers of the Law, and in this reſpect were greatly inferior to Moſes. This is of itſelf a ſufficient proof, that a ſucceſſion of Prophets could not be *ſolely* alluded to. The perſon who was to be raiſed up, could not be like Moſes in a ſtrict ſenſe, unleſs he were a legiſlator—he muſt give a law to mankind, and conſequently a more excellent law; for if the firſt had been perfect, as the Author of the Epiſtle to the Hebrews argues, there could have been no room for a ſecond. Chriſt was this legiſlator, who gave a law more perfect in its nature, more extenſive in its application, and more glorious in its promiſes and rewards.

Other Prophets had revelations in dreams and viſions—but Moſes talked with God face to face. Chriſt ſpake that which he had ſeen with the Father. Moſes and Chriſt are the only perſons recorded in ſacred Hiſtory, who had this *immediate* communication with God. Moſes delivered his people from cruel op-

preſſion

preſſion and heavy bondage—Chriſt from the far worſe tyranny of Satan and ſin. Moſes contended with the magicians, and had the advantage over them ſo manifeſtly, that they could no longer withſtand him, but were forced to acknowledge the divine power by which he was aſſiſted—Chriſt ejected evil ſpirits, and received their acknowledgments, both of the dignity of his nature and the importance of his miſſion.

Moſes aſſured the people whom he conducted, that if they would be obedient, they ſhould enter into the happy land of Promiſe, which land was uſually underſtood by the wiſer Jews to be an emblem and a figure of that eternal and celeſtial kingdom, to which the Meſſiah was to open an entrance—Chriſt brought life and immortality to light, and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers[d].

Moſes wrought a great variety of miracles, and in this particular the parallel is remarkable: ſince beſides Chriſt "there aroſe not a Prophet in Iſrael like unto Moſes, whom the

[d] Jortin's Remarks on Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, vol. i. p. 200. Newton on the Prophecies, vol. i. p. 156.

Lord

Lord knew face to face, and all the signs and the wonders which the Lord sent him to do." Moses was not only a lawgiver, a prophet, and a worker of miracles, but a king and a priest. He is called king[e], and he had indeed, though not the pomp and the crown and the sceptre, yet the authority of a king, and was the supreme magistrate; and the office of priest he often exercised. In all these offices the resemblance between Moses and Christ was striking and exact.

Moses fed the people miraculously in the wilderness—Christ with bread and with doctrine; and the manna which descended from heaven, and the loaves which Christ multiplied, were proper images of the spiritual food which the Saviour of the world bestowed upon his disciples.

Moses foretold the calamities that would befal his nation for their disobedience—Christ predicted the same events, fixed the precise time, and enlarged upon the previous and subsequent circumstances.

[e] Deut. xxxiii. 5.

Moses chose and appointed 70 Elders to preside over the people—Christ chose the same number of Disciples. Moses sent 12 men to spy out the land which was to be conquered—Christ sent his 12 Apostles into the world, to subdue it by a more glorious and miraculous conquest. Moses interceded for transgressors, and caused an atonement to be made for them, and stopped the wrath of God by lifting up the brazen serpent in the wilderness—Christ was himself lifted up, and was the atonement for the whole world.

Moses instituted the Passover, when a lamb was sacrificed, none of whose bones were to be broken, and whose blood protected the people from destruction—Christ was himself that Paschal Lamb. Moses had a very wicked and perverse generation committed to his care; and, to enable him to rule them, miraculous powers were given to him, and he used his utmost endeavours to make the people obedient to God, and to save them from ruin; but in vain: in the space of 40 years they all fell in the wilderness except two—Christ also was given to a generation not less wicked and perverse; his instructions and his miracles were lost upon them; and in

in about the ſame ſpace of time after they had rejected him, they were deſtroyed.

Moſes was very meek, above all the men that were upon the face of the earth—Chriſt was meek and lowly; mildneſs, patience, and reſignation were conſpicuous in all his actions; he ſubmitted with the moſt perfect compoſure of mind to every indignity; when he was reviled, he anſwered not again, but reſigned himſelf to him who judgeth rightly.

The people could not enter into the land of promiſe till Moſes was dead—by the death of Chriſt "the kingdom of heaven was opened to believers."

In the death of Moſes and of Chriſt there is alſo a reſemblance of ſome of the circumſtances. Moſes died in one ſenſe for the iniquities of his people: it was their rebellion, which was the occaſion of it, which drew down the diſpleaſure of God upon them and upon him: "The Lord," ſaid Moſes to them, "was angry with me for your ſakes, ſaying, Thou ſhalt not go in thither, but thou ſhalt die[f]." Moſes therefore went up

[f] Deut. i. 37.

in the sight of the people to the top of Mount Nebo, and there he died, when he was in perfect vigour, "when his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated."—Christ suffered for the sins of men, and was led up in the presence of the people to Mount Calvary, where he died in the flower of his age, and when he was in his full natural strength. Neither Moses nor Christ, as far as we may collect from sacred History, were ever sick or felt any bodily decay or infirmity, which would have rendered them unfit for the toils they underwent. Their sufferings were of another kind.

As Moses a little before his death promised the people that God would raise them up a Prophet like unto him—so Christ, taking leave of his afflicted Disciples, told them, "I will not leave you comfortless; I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter."

Moses expressly declares, "that it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which the Prophet shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." The Jews rejected Christ, and God rejected them. In the whole course of the history of the Jews there

there is no instance recorded, where, in the case of disobedience to the warnings or advice of any Prophet, such terrible calamities ensued, as those which followed the rejection of the Messiah. The overthrow of the Jewish empire, the destruction of so many Jews at the siege of Jerusalem, the dispersion of the surviving people, and the history of the Jews down to the present day—calamities beyond measure and beyond example—fulfilled the Prophecy of Moses.

Is this similitude and correspondence in so many particulars the effect of mere chance? Let us search all the records of universal history, and see if we can find a person who was so like to Moses as was Christ, and so like to Christ as was Moses. If we cannot find such a one, then have we found him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write, "Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God[s]."

The great design of this Prophecy seems to have been to intimate to the Jews, that at some future time some new lawgiver would arise,

[s] I am indebted for most of the preceding circumstances of resemblance to the learned and judicious Dr. Jortin. See his Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, vol. i. p. 200, &c.

"like unto Moses;" and consequently it must appear, that his Law was not to be of perpetual obligation, but was intended to be superseded by one that was to be of the greatest consequence to mankind; as the Almighty announced its future promulgation, even at the time when he gave his express commands to his chosen people. The Law of Moses was confined to the children of Israel; the Law of Christ was universal, designed to illuminate every part of the earth, and to fulfil the promise originally made to Adam, and repeated to Abraham. The promise of another Lawgiver and Prophet was a continuation of the great chain of Prophecy, intended to keep in the view of the contemporaries of Moses and the succeeding generations, the assurance of the coming of the Messiah.

CLASS

CLASS 1.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

The Fulfilment of the conditional Promises and Threats pronounced by Moses to the Israelites.

IF we consider Moses as a patriot, an historian, a philosopher, and a founder of a state, independently of his character as "a Prophet and a Teacher sent from God[a]," it will be acknowledged that he stands unrivalled in the annals of mankind. Of all lawgivers he was the most virtuous and the most sublime. In times of the most remote antiquity, when the grossest corruption of manners and the most irrational and cruel superstition prevailed in all the surrounding nations, this great Legislator arose to confirm his countrymen in the worship of the true God, and give them

[a] Y. W. 2518. B. C. 1491.

a rule of conduct, in which religious, moral, and civil duties were so intimately blended, as to preclude any attempt to separate them, and to which their descendants have continued to adhere for above 3200 years. His laws are transmitted perfect to the present age, whilst nothing remains of the productions of other legislators but a few fragments and the names of their authors. A great part of the inhabitants of the globe revere them, and have adopted them in many points into their own civil and religious institutions.

But it is not possible to account for the superior wisdom, the perfect consistency, and the singular fate of the laws of Moses, without the acknowledgement that he received them, by an especial revelation for an especial purpose, from God himself. The uninterrupted attachment indeed of the Jews, and the general veneration in which Moses and his laws have ever been held, have arisen from the persuasion, that this great Legislator was divinely inspired; a persuasion founded upon the sublime nature of his laws, the miracles he wrought to establish in his countrymen the belief of their divine origin, the solemn and tremendous sanctions which he prophetically annexed in confirmation of their divine authority,

rity, and the *fulfilment* of the conditional promises and threats to which every age has successively borne witness. This last circumstance may be considered as proving not only the divine mission of the Jewish Lawgiver, but as proving also the constant superintendance of God over the people he had chosen[b] to distinguish by this peculiar dispensation, according to the promise, which, as we have seen, was given to Abraham. To this point then we shall at present confine our attention.

Moses, after he had delivered particular instructions relative to political and religious duties, and had fixed the particular punishments and rewards which were best calculated to secure public order and domestic happiness, pronounced in the most explicit terms to the Israelites, that prosperity, peace, and abundance should be the certain national rewards of their piety and observance of the Divine commands; and that misery and war, at-

[b] "The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you." Deut. vii. 6, 7, 8. See likewise 1 Cor. i. 27. James ii. 5.

tended

tended with every public calamity and private affliction, ſhould be the certain natſonal puniſhments of their diſobedience. Predictions in general do not include ſuch an alternative; ſince they have commonly a view to one fixed train of events, and to no other. But we here find a twofold condition propoſed, and the event was to be determined by the manner in which the Iſraelites ſhould act—"I call heaven and earth to record this day againſt you," ſaid their great Lawgiver, "that I have ſet before you life and death, bleſſing and curſing; therefore chooſe life, that both thou and thy ſeed may live:" The ſanctions thus annexed to the objects of choice are peculiar to the laws of Moſes. Other lawgivers had a view only to the immediate puniſhment of any individual ſubject;—the Hebrew Legiſlator goes much farther; his declarations are extended to the future fortunes of his people in their collective and national capacity. He marks out the preciſe mode in which they were afterwards to be happy or miſerable, and the particular circumſtances in which they were to be involved in the courſe of a long ſeries of ages. No legiſlator, who was not inſpired, could poſſibly have anticipated a hiſtory ſo ſingular, ſo faithful, and ſo minutely accurate.

A ſcene

A scene of wonder is here opened to us: for in the awful declarations of this Prophecy we read the complete account of the most remarkable events in the history of the Jews. It is a recital, that agrees exactly with their subsequent situations, at various periods of time extremely remote from the date of the Prophecy—a recital that has no reference or application whatever to any other people. No nation was so peculiarly circumstanced, no one was so distinguished from the rest of mankind by remarkable laws, government, customs, and character. The conclusion therefore is obvious, that at the time when Moses flourished, he could not have the example of any other nation before his eyes, whose vicissitudes of fortune furnished any grounds for the conditions he proposed to his countrymen. The uncommon fate of an uncommon nation is pronounced at a distance of time, when no reach of human foresight, no calculation of chances could possibly extend to the successive and distant events of their history.

A commentary on this Prophecy of Moses is the history of the Jews brought down from their establishment in Canaan to the present times.

times. Referring to authentic writers[c] for more particular completions of its other parts, we hasten, in conformity to the confined plan of this work, to select some of those great events, and most striking circumstances, which seemed to have pressed most forcibly upon the mind of the great Lawgiver of Israel, and which are illustrations of the following declarations[d].

Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, and the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee. The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain into thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

[c] Patrick's Commentary on the Bible, vol. iii. Parker's Commentary, vol. v. p. 551. Jackson's Works, vol. i. p. 92.

[d] Deut. xxviii. 4, 5, 11, 12. Levit. xxvi. 3, 4, 5.

If

If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit: And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing-time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.

When the Israelites obtained possession of the promised land, these assurances were realized; they found the soil favourable to the production of the various fruits which are common in the East, and well adapted to pasturage and agriculture. As their numbers were considerable, they found it necessary to practise every method by which the various fruits of the earth could be best cultivated, and produced in the greatest abundance. Their labours were crowned with success. Such was the plenty of corn in one period of their history, that they were not only furnished with a sufficient quantity for their own consumption, but were enabled to supply the Tyrians with it. The woods and aromatic plants were favourable to the increase of bees, and olives thrived in the dry parts of Judæa; and hence they were well supplied with

with honey and oil. The sides of the mountains and rocks were covered with vines. The gardens produced melons, gourds, cucumbers, and figs, which were at that time, and now continue to be, the favourite fruits of the natives of that warm climate. The palm-trees that grew around the green pastures of Jericho, yielded a considerable profit; and the balsam of Gilead, the most valuable shrub of the kind, was famous for its delicious fragrance, and medical uses.

The cultivation of the soil was favoured by the peculiar nature of the institutions of Moses. To each Israelite was allotted his portion of arable land, at the time of the first settlement under Joshua. And to each district were assigned common pastures for the support of their numerous flocks and herds. The express laws of the Jubilee revoked all alienations of estates every fifty years. Every inhabitant was therefore confined to his patrimony, and laboured to improve it with the greatest diligence. In the reign of David the Jews were nearly upon an equality with respect to the possession of land. If, by the increase of a family, it was necessary to divide an estate into shares, the smallness of each of them was compensated by breeding large

large flocks of cattle in the common pastures.

Thus were opened to the children of Israel the peculiar sources of affluence promised in their laws. They were not taught to expect gold, silver, or the benefits of commerce. What they were promised they received in abundance; the luxuriant produce of fruits and vegetables, of sheep and oxen, of the olive grounds and the pastures, of the harvest and the vintage*.

This representation of the improved state of Judea in its most flourishing time, is collected partly from the Bible itself, and partly from the works of Strabo, Josephus, Hecataeus and Tacitus, who possessed the best means of

* Some medals are still remaining as old as the time of the Maccabees, upon which are to be seen ears of corn and measures, to show the fertility of the country, and the honour in which agriculture was held. History of the Israelites, by Fleury, p. 42, 221, &c. 1 Maccab. xiv. 8, &c.—Josephus says, that in his time the country round Jerusalem was well planted, and interspersed with gardens for more than eleven miles round the city. Newcombe on the Conduct of our Lord, p. 227. Deut. xxviii. 1. 7. 12. 8, 9, 10.

accurate

accurate information, and fully confirm the accounts of the sacred writers[f].

And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all the nations of the earth. The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways. The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy store-houses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto: and he shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways. And all people

[f] Josephus contra Apion. lib. i. sect. 22. Taciti Hist. lib. v. Newton on the Prophecies, vol. i. p. 228, &c. Strabo, p. 763, 749. Edit. Paris, 1620.

of

of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of thee.

For the fulfilment of these promises we may look to many of the most interesting parts of the Old Testament. The time of the government of the first Judges was remarkable for the happiness of the Jewish people[g]. The promises made in the wilderness relative to the rains, the harvests, the sabbath-day, and the seventh year of rest to the land, were then fulfilled: whilst the people, impressed with the novelty of these especial blessings of divine Providence, walked with little interruption in the commandments of their God. The reigns both of David and Solomon were distinguished by much prosperity and happiness. The government was then firmly established, the Jews were victorious over their enemies, enjoyed a long continuation of peace, and great temporal comforts attended their obedience to the divine commands. The building of the Temple was a signal indication of the piety of its founder, and the favour of the Almighty[h]. The subjects of Solomon lived in security, reaping the fruits of plenty and opulence, and every one reposed under his own vine, and his

[g] B. C. 1296. [h] B. C. 1014.

own fig-tree: this was the most splendid era of Jewish glory. The riches and magnificence of the court of Solomon was superior to those of all the kings of the earth. His renown was extended to distant countries; "His name went far unto the islands, and for his peace he was beloved[i]." He was celebrated, and still continues to be so, among the inhabitants of the East, for his power, his wisdom, his extensive territories, and his supposed control over evil spirits and the elements. They still give his name, as a title of the highest honour, to their most powerful sovereigns; and they believe that this illustrious monarch of Israel possessed an universal empire.

The reign of Jehoshaphat[k], who was remarkable for his zealous attachment to the religion of his ancestors, was likewise attended with various blessings. Hezekiah[l], preserved in a wonderful manner from the invasion of the Assyrians, and under such circumstances as had a peculiar reference to a deliverance from dangers foretold by Moses, united with his people in the observance of

[i] 1 Kings iv. 5, 6, &c. Ecclus. xlvii. 16. Univ. Hist. vol. i. p. 802. Calmet's Dict. Art. Solomon.

[k] 2 Chron. xvii.

[l] 2 Kings xviii, xix. Isaiah xxxvi, xxxvii.

the

the Divine commands with the most fervent devotion. During this auspicious period the Jews enjoyed the festivity and the grateful repose of the sabbatical and jubilee years[m].

Josiah,

[m] The sabbatical year was celebrated every seventh year, when the land was left without culture. At that time slaves were set at liberty, debts were remitted, and every one regained the inheritance that had been alienated. Its observance was appointed by God to preserve the remembrance of the creation of the world, to enforce the acknowledgment of his sovereign authority over all things, and particularly over the land of Canaan, which he had given to the Hebrews by delivering up the fruits of their fields to the poor and the stranger. Exod. xxiii. 10. Levit. xxv. 2, 8, &c. Calmet, vol. ii. p. 569.

The jubilee year was the fiftieth year which happened after seven weeks of years, or seven times seven years. Levit. xxv. 10. The proclamation of this happy season was made by the priests and people, who resorted to the Temple in a grand procession, attended with every circumstance of pomp and festivity. Its commencement was celebrated with the greatest demonstrations of joy. Several privileges belonged to this, which did not belong to the sabbatical year, and the latter had likewise some small advantages over the former. The sabbatical year annulled debts, which the jubilee did not; but the jubilee restored slaves to their liberty, and lands to their original owners; besides, a restitution of lands was made immediately upon the beginning of the jubilee—whereas in the sabbatical year, the debts were not discharged till the end of the year. The estates which had been purchased, or given, were returned to their old masters; those which came by right of succession, continued with those who enjoyed them; contracts of sale, wherein a certain number of years was ex-

Josiah, emphatically styled the good, by his profound humility and exemplary piety, suspended through a reign of more than 30 years, the evils that were hovering over his idolatrous subjects[n]. It is expressly mentioned in this period of the Jewish history, that they were destined to suffer the calamities denounced in their laws, against their departure from the worship of Jehovah.

The unhappy times of the Babylonish captivity were succeeded by that auspicious epoch of Jewish happiness, when Cyrus[o], the most renowned monarch[p] of the East, permitted the Jews to return from captivity, in order to rebuild their City and Temple. The lively

pressed, subsisted during all those years, notwithstanding the approach of the jubilee. But it annulled absolute and unlimited contracts. It was the principal design of its institution, to prevent the destruction of the partition of lands, that was made by Joshua, and the confusion of tribes and families. After the Babylonish captivity, these points could no longer be attended to—many who returned into their native country, settled as they could; and a number of families, perhaps whole tribes, continued in the place of their captivity. Archbishop Usher places the first jubilee observed after the promulgation of the Law, Y. W. 2609, B. C. 1395. Calmet, vol. i. p. 888.

[n] 2 Kings xxii, xxiii.—2 Chron. xxxiv, xxxv.

[o] B. C. 536.

[p] Ezra i, ii, &c.

pictures

pictures which the Prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel[q] had previously drawn of the happy days that should succeed the captivity, were realized; and the people returning to their own country, enjoyed the blessings of liberty and affluence. "The men were multiplied, the cities were inhabited, and the wastes were builded; and man and beast were multiplied, and they were settled after their old estates. The desolate land was tilled, and the ruined cities were inhabited; and the Heathen knew that God was the Lord."

In a subsequent period Ptolemy Philadelphus[r], king of Egypt, established many colonies of Jews in his dominions[s]; caused the sacred books of the Law and the Prophets to be translated into the Greek language, and sent magnificent presents to the Temple at Jerusalem.

In the latter times of the Jewish government a remnant only, as had been foretold by the Prophets, remained faithful to their God amidst the general depravity of the people—

[q] Isaiah xliv. 28. Ezek. xxxvi. 10, &c.

[r] B. C. 246.

[s] Prideaux, vol. ii. p. 7, &c.

among these the family of the Maccabees [t] were most distinguished for valour, as well as for piety; and by them Jerusalem was recovered from the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes, the Temple was purified, its worship restored, and tranquillity re-established. But the majority of the people pursued their progress in wickedness, till the cup of their iniquity was filled by the rejection and the crucifixion of the Messiah.

The great Lawgiver of the Jews, when he proceeds to the alternative of the case just considered, is much more severe in pronouncing denunciations of punishment; much more circumstantial in his detail of public calamity, private distress, and affliction both of mind and body, than he was in the detail of rewards; as if he had foreseen, that the disobedience of the Jews would far exceed their observance of his laws [u].

But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to

[t] Calmet, vol. i. p. 891. Maccab. b. i, ii. Prideaux, vol. ii. p. 136. 145, &c.

[u] The promises of plenty, prosperity, and temporal good are limited to *fourteen* verses; the threats of destruction and war are extended to *fifty-four*. Deut. xxviii. 15. 28. 43. 33. 37. 49, 50, 51, 52. 63, 64.

observe

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observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee and overtake thee: The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart. The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low. The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not, eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway. And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee. The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation, whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young. And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee. And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, throughout all thy land, which the Lord thy God hath given thee. And it shall come to

pass, that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you: so the Lord shall rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other Gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stones.

Such are some of the most striking parts of the menacing prediction. And if the professed brevity of this work did not prohibit the detail, it would be easy to go through their whole history, and point out the different seasons at which their idolatry and disobedience brought upon them different manifestations of the divine displeasure, in all the ordinary calamities of war and famine[x]. But it will suffice for the object of this Chapter, to advert only to those remarkable instances when the Jews were conquered by the Assyrians and the Romans; because it is plain that the Prophecy principally relates to the invasion of a formidable enemy, and the

[x] 1 Chron. xxi. 12. Ruth i. 1. 1 Sam. xxi. 1. 2 Kings vi. 25. xxv. 3. 1 Kings xx. 1. 2 Kings xvii. 6.

disasters

disasters peculiar to the sieges of great and populous cities. The Jews, as we see above, are threatened in case of their rebellion, with captivity; and the character and remote situation of the hostile nations by whom they were to be taken captive, are particularly described. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, and other Prophets, treading in the steps of Moses, but nearer the event, repeat many striking parts of the Prediction, and expressly declare the cause of the impending danger to be, the prevailing idolatry of their countrymen, and their attachment to the prophane rites and customs of the Heathen. Accordingly, in the reign of Zedekiah, a nation [the Assyrian] agreeing with the inspired descriptions, invade Judea, and fulfilling the Prophecy, pillage and burn the temple, put persons of both sexes and all ages to the sword, and carry away multitudes as slaves to Babylon. But fulfilled as the Prophecy may seem to have been, and actually was, in this and many instances, the Jews were not therefore released from the power of it. Temporal blessings when obedient, and temporal punishments when disobedient, are the terms of the Jewish covenant; in force from the time of the Egyptian bondage, to the present hour. When by their repentance, which the Divine

prescience

prescience foresaw, when 70 years were fixed as the limits of their punishment, the Babylonian captivity was terminated, their return to their own land (where for a time they enjoyed signal marks of the Divine favour) was not followed by any long continued obedience; and the threats and even the terms of the Prophecy again attached upon them. Their adversity accordingly increased by degrees, as their wickedness became more and more general, and more and more enormous. After the death of Alexander, their country suffered severely by the wars which ensued, between the Princes who divided the Grecian Empire. Ptolemy Soter took possession of Jerusalem on the sabbath-day[y], and carried a great number of the Jews captive into Egypt; and the peace and the privileges they enjoyed during the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, were followed by the extreme miseries inflicted by the execrable tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes[z]. From that period of their history, excepting only the brilliant scene of happiness, which the piety and valour of the Maccabees were allowed to open for this once more repentant people, we see them immersed in crimes, confusion, and tumult; constantly subject to the

[y] B. C. 320. [z] B. C. 170.

Syrian,

Syrian, the Egyptian, or the Roman power; and continually a prey to plunder, slavery and massacre, till, by rejecting the Messiah, they became liable to the punishment denounced by Moses against those who should "not hearken to the Prophet whom the Lord should raise up, like unto him;" and in consequence have suffered, and are still suffering, the severest chastisement a nation can undergo.

To the accounts of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, and the entire conquest of Judea by the Romans, and the state in which the country and the people have ever since continued, are we then to look, for the most minute and complete accomplishment of these awful predictions; and here we shall indeed find the agreement between facts and Prophecies most strikingly exact. The remote situation, the unknown language, the "fierce countenance," and the martial character of the Romans are strongly marked in this Prophetical description, as if designed to distinguish them from the Asiatic conquerors of the Jews*.

They

* Several Jewish Expositors are cited by Patrick and Parker, in their Commentaries upon this Prophecy. Manasseh ben Israel, a very learned and acute Rabbi of the Spanish

They came from far—from the end of the earth. Not only the diſtance of Rome from Jeruſalem is thus marked, but this intimation of remoteneſs is peculiarly applicable to the generals and armies by whom Judea was conquered. In order to carry on war againſt that country, Pompey left a very diſtant province, and Veſpaſian and Julius Severus conducted their troops from the iſland of Britain. Adrian and Trajan, by whom they were finally ſubdued, were natives of the diſtant country of Spain.

They came as ſwift as the eagle flieth. The rapid flight of the moſt ravenous bird of prey may be conſidered as a juſt emblem of a deſtroying army; and the eagle as peculiarly applicable to the Roman ſtandard. But the alluſion has alſo an exact hiſtorical propriety; as Titus[b], being eager to return to Rome, preſſed on the ſiege of Jeruſalem with the

Spaniſh Synagogue in Amſterdam, who flouriſhed in the beginning of the laſt century, is of opinion, that at the forty-ninth verſe commences the Prophecy of the calamities under the ſecond Temple. He refers all the latter part of the chapter to the invaſion of the Romans, and the misfortunes that followed it. Parker's Commentary, vol. v. p. 576.

[b] Tacit. Hiſt. lib. v.

greateſt

greatest vigour and alacrity, and preferred an attack by storm to the slow operations of a blockade.

A nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand. The tongue of the Romans the Jews did not understand. There certainly was some similarity in the languages of the Jews and the Assyrians; but previous to the invasion of Judea by Pompey, there had been no intercourse between the Jews and the Romans: and the Jews were utterly ignorant of the dialects of the western troops, which composed the Roman armies.

That the Romans were *a nation of a fierce countenance*, remarkable for their manly and stern features, and intrepid aspect, might be easily proved at large, from the representations of sculptors and medallists, and the descriptions of their poets and historians. And their haughty and inflexible character is no less forcibly delineated in the following sentence: *Which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young.* Besides the reference to the indiscriminate slaughter and cruel treatment of the Jews of all ages, both at and after the siege of Jerusalem.

It

It ought to be obſerved, that at the time when Moſes uttered this Prophecy, the children of Iſrael, ſo far from having any fenced cities, had no fixed place of reſidence, but were travelling through the wilderneſs. The threats of their Lawgiver could not therefore reſult from any circumſtances of their ſituation at that particular time: yet ſtill he deſcribes every circumſtance in the ſame manner as Joſephus, who wrote the account of theſe wars nearly 1500 years after the prediction.

The Lord ſhall ſmite thee with madneſs and blindneſs. At the time when Jeruſalem was cloſely preſſed on all ſides by the Roman armies, three factions, influenced by the moſt bitter rancour and malice, carried on a civil war within its walls. In proportion as ſafety became more improbable, their audacity, or rather their infatuation, increaſed, and extended to all ranks, from the rulers to the common people. All were equally blind to their dreadful ſituation; and internal diſcord conſpired with their ferocious enemies to hurry them down the precipice of deſtruction. Joſephus [c], after relating that the beſieged, elated by a repulſe given to the Romans,

[c] De Bell. Jud. lib. v. c. 8.

perſuaded

perſuaded themſelves that the city could never be taken, adds, in a ſtrain of obſervation that throws the ſtrongeſt light upon the Prophecy of Moſes, that God had ſo darkened their minds with extreme blindneſs, on account of their numerous tranſgreſſions, that they did not calculate the ſuperior force of the Romans, or reflect on the dreadful effects of a ſtubborn oppoſition to their arms.

The regular train of the Prophetical declarations leads us to a remarkable threat in the ſpeech of Moſes, moſt ſtriking for its ſingularity; moſt ſhocking for its oppoſition to the feelings of nature; and moſt improbable ever to happen[d].

And thou ſhalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the fleſh of thy ſons, and of thy daughters, which the Lord thy God hath given thee, in the ſiege and in the ſtraitneſs wherewith thine enemies ſhall diſtreſs thee.—The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to ſet the ſole of her foot upon the ground for delicateneſs and tenderneſs, her eye ſhall be evil towards the huſband of her boſom,

[d] Deut. xxviii. 53. 56, 57.

and

and towards her son, and towards her daughter, and towards her children, which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly, in the siege and straitness wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates.

The fact nevertheless did happen; first in Samaria, the capital of the idolatrous tribes, when besieged by Benhadad, king of Assyria: a second time in Jerusalem, when besieged by Nebuchadnezzar: and Josephus particularly relates a third instance of the fulfilment of this Prediction during the last siege of Jerusalem by the Romans[e]. Throwing a veil over a story at which humanity shudders, we shall only observe, that the rank of the lady mentioned by Josephus, agrees precisely with prophetical description[f]; that the fact predicted is perhaps the only one of the kind in history so circumstantially recorded[g]; and that these facts

[e] Josephus, lib. vi. c. 3.

[f] Deut. xxviii. 56. The word translated "delicate," may be better rendered, voluptuous, luxurious, accustomed to a life of pleasure and indulgence. See Parkhurst's Heb. Lexicon, p. 487.

[g] The Historian deplores the cruel deed, as a most flagrant violation of nature; such as was never perpetrated by Greek or Barbarian; and such as he expressly declares he

facts happening in conformity to the Prophecy, are perhaps the only ones of the kind in the history of the world.

And it shall come to pass, that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you, so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. The Romans expelled the inhabitants that survived the siege of Jerusalem, and forcibly carried away great numbers of them into different countries. When the Emperor Hadrian built a city upon the foundation of Jerusalem, he called it Elia Capitolina; and forbade the Jews, on pain of death, to approach within sight of it. From that time to the present day, Judea has been subject to foreign Princes; and few Jews, and those of low condition who live as strangers in their own country, are to be found among its inhabitants[h]. The destruction of Jerusalem by

he would not have related, if there had not been many credible witnesses of its truth. Josephus, lib. vi. c. 3, sect. 8.

[h] See the Travels of Sandys, who visited the Holy Land in the last century; of Volney, who accurately surveyed it in 1783; and the accounts of preceding historians and travellers.

Titus, is acknowledged to have been far more fatal in its effects, than any preceding event of the kind, that ever happened to the Jews: it was therefore, in the opinion of both Jews and Christians, the memorable occasion, in which the Prophecy was accomplished in its fullest extent and most signal manner, and it was followed by a train of the most remarkable consequences [i].

And if ye will not hearken unto me, then will I punish you seven times more for your sins; your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits. And I will bring the land into desolation; and your enemies, which dwell therein, shall be astonished at it. And your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Such has been the state of the Holy Land ever since the judgments of God have fallen upon the Jews. After their expulsion by Titus, it was left a prey to neglect and barrenness. During the crusades, it was ravaged by the hostile armies of Saracens and Christians: and since it became a province of the Ottoman Empire, it has exhibited the same scene of desolation.

[i] Levit. xxvi. 18. 20. 32, 33. Deut. xxix. 22. 24, 25.

The

The face of the country, once so populous and flourishing, has for many ages presented nothing to the eye of the traveller, but mean villages thinly inhabited, ruins of antient buildings, fields uncultivated, naked hills, and barren rocks.

Judging by the present forlorn and desolate state of Palestine, the infidel is disposed to call in question the truth of the Scripture history. He maintains, that it never could have been a fruitful land, and that the people who settled in it, exhausted by the oppressive labour of its cultivation, could not enjoy, in any fair sense, the *rest* promised them in the wilderness. But of all objections this is surely the most futile. The present state of the islands in the Archipelago, of Greece, and of the country around Rome, formerly so fertile and productive, contradicts all accounts of their antient condition, as much as the present state of Judea can possibly do. Travellers agree that a great part of the rocky soil of Judea is composed of Tufa[k]; and volcanic matter is known to be fertile in the highest degree,

[k] Tufa is a name given to stone formed of volcanic ashes, concreted with other species, in which argil prevails.

after a certain period of time when it has gathered soil. Is it incredible that the children of Israel found the land of Canaan in the highly fertile state, known to be common upon the sides of volcanic mountains, where the ashes, that have fallen during an eruption, in a series of years have been mellowed into a productive mould? and that the earthquakes and various convulsions of nature that happened at and since the destruction of Jerusalem (many of which are recorded in history) have entirely changed the face of the country?—Maundrell's description greatly strengthens the supposition of such changes. "Not far from Bethany you arrive at the mountainous desert in which our blessed Saviour was led by the Spirit, to be tempted by the Devil; a most miserable, dry, barren place it is, consisting of high rocky mountains, so torn and disordered, as if the earth had suffered some great convulsion, in which its very bowels had been turned upwards[l]." And Volney[m], an intelligent traveller, but an enemy both to the religion of Moses and of Christ, has the candour to confess, that the present fertility of some parts

[l] Maundrell's Travels, p. 79.

[m] Voyages en Syrie, tom. ii. p. 302. 330. 338, &c.

of

of Syria correſponds with the account given of it in the Old Teſtament. In the courſe of his accurate ſurvey, he remarked that an almoſt total neglect of agriculture, and of every improvement of the ſoil, prevailed throughout Paleſtine. If the land be unfruitful, it rather proceeds from the nature of the deſpotic government, which checks induſtry, than the want of a prolific power in the earth. Patches of ſoil that formerly crowned them, were to be ſeen in the laſt century upon the rocky mountains of Paleſtine; and the rows of ſtones could clearly be traced, that were uſed to ſupport the ſoil upon the ſlope of the hills. Upon the ſides of Libanus there are the remains of antient cultivation; a circumſtance which confirms the accounts given by writers of the antient ſtate of the country as to its fertility and population. We may form ſome opinion of the ſucceſs which crowned the labours of the antient inhabitants of Judea, by obſerving the preſent ſtate of Switzerland, and ſome parts of Spain, where the induſtrious natives reap a harveſt from the rocky ſoil, and obtain wine, corn, and fruits; from ſpots which, if left to themſelves, would be the moſt unproductive.

abound; they are ſettled in various parts of Africa and America, and in the kingdoms of Europe°. They exiſt as a conſpicuous monument of Prophetical truth and Divine juſtice, to every nation in which they dwell.

And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not caſt them away, neither will I abhor them, to deſtroy them utterly. No proofs drawn from hiſtory are wanted to illuſtrate this part of the Prophecy. After the long ſeries of oppreſſion and miſery to which they have been expoſed, ever ſince their diſperſion; after having been given up to fire, famine, and peſtilence; to maſſacres and perſecutions, as the objects of hatred and malice to every people among whom they have ſettled, they are ſo far from being deſtroyed, that they not only exiſt as a ſeparate people, but in many places form opulent and flouriſhing communities.

° One million are ſuppoſed to be reſident in the various provinces of Turkey—three hundred thouſand in Perſia, India, and China—and ſeventeen hundred thouſand in Chriſtendom, Africa, and America. Their outward condition and circumſtances are generally tolerable, except in Portugal and Spain. Brown's Harmony of Scripture Prophecies, p. 322. This ſtatement is confirmed by other writers. See the Jews' Letters to Voltaire, vol. ii. p. 175.

And

And thou shalt be an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word among all the nations whither the Lord shall lead thee. This has literally been the case at all times, since their national punishment has been inflicted. The very name of a Jew has been used as a term of peculiar reproach and infamy. Their avarice, usury, and insensibility have long been in a manner proverbial; being considered as more peculiarly marking their character, than that of any other people in the world.

Reflexions upon the common course of events would naturally have induced Moses to draw conclusions very different from the fate which we have seen he denounced against the Israelites, in case of disobedience. It was natural to suppose, that, if they were reduced to subjection, it would be by some neighbouring power, with whom, and with whose appearance, they were well acquainted; that if they were driven from their country, another people would possess it, and the land itself preserve the same character and description as before; and if they were completely dispersed and carried captives into foreign countries, that they would suffer the common lot of other captive nations, and be blended with their conquerors; and in time entirely lose their

peculiar

peculiar name and character. The fact, as well as the prediction, has been directly the reverse. According to the Prophetic words of the inspired writers, they have been twice enslaved by distant and unknown nations; their land has become not only desolate, but barren; and they exist at this day dispersed among all nations, but not destroyed; the living, conspicuous, and well-known witnesses of the truth of Prophecy. The long period of three thousand years has passed since this Prophecy was delivered, which the lapse of ages, and the revolutions of human events, have only served to confirm and to fulfil.

CLASS

CLASS I.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

The Fulfilment of the Prophecy, that Cyrus was to be the Conqueror of Babylon, and the Deliverer of the Jews.

THE Prophecy which is next to be the subject of our attention, is in itself a peculiar one: clear and explicit in its language; important in its reference to the great design for which the Jews were distinguished from the rest of the world; and an epitome of some of the most signal events recorded in antient history[a]. It was delivered by Isaiah, according to the shortest computation, more than an hundred years[b] before the birth of the elder

[a] Isaiah delivered the Prophecy, Y.W. 3292. B.C. 712.

[b] Josephus places this Prophecy two hundred and ten years before the birth of Cyrus. Critici sacri, tom. iv. p. 5190.

Cyrus;

Cyrus[c]; and represents the Almighty as calling upon him expressly by his name as the future deliverer of his people from their allotted captivity; and as the mighty conqueror of nations, led on by the Omnipotent Ruler of the universe, to execute his sovereign will, while unconscious of guidance or assistance in the rapidity and extent of his victories; it minutely describes the siege of Babylon and the conquest of the Assyrian Empire; and distinctly affirms that Cyrus shall issue a decree for the rebuilding Jerusalem, and publish to the Gentile nations the greatness and the power of the God of Israel—the Lord of the whole earth[d].

Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself; that frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish; that confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his mes-

[c] Cyrus was born Y.W. 3405. B.C. 599.

[d] Isaiah xliv. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28. xlv. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

sengers;

sengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof: that saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the Temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from

from the west, that there is none besides me: I am the Lord, and there is none else.

Concerning the application of the name, which, it may be observed, is *twice* mentioned, no cavil can be raised, or doubt entertained. The Greek and Latin vary very little, either in orthography or pronunciation, from the Hebrew text, and the antient Chaldee Paraphrase; and in the various editions of the Hebrew Bible it is uniformly found to be the same[e]. At the time when the Prophecy was delivered, the Assyrian Empire had reached the summit of its glory; and the Medes and Persians, although making some advances towards the establishment of a rival power in Asia, were, in comparison, very inconsiderable. The final union of these kingdoms, which effected the conquest of Assyria, was occasioned by a circumstance, to which, from the extreme distance of time at which Isaiah prophesied, no human foresight could possibly look forward. Cambyses king of Persia married Mandane the daughter of Astyages king of

[e] See the Hebrew text and the Chaldee Paraphrase, Waltoni Polyglot. vol. iii. p. 120. Vitringa, tom. ii. p. 491. Critici Sacri, tom. iv. p. 5190. Poli Synopsis Critic. tom. iii. p. 430.

the

the Medes, and the offspring of that alliance was the renowned Cyrus. When appointed general of the confederate forces of the East, by his uncle Cyaxares, who is called in the book of Daniel, Darius the Median, he extended his conquests from the Egean Sea to the Euphrates[f]. He derived much of his success, as the antient writers inform us, from being the first to establish the use of cavalry in the Persian army. *His people rode upon horses*[g].

An assembly of great nations, as the Prophets had likewise foretold, came up against Babylon. It was the only place that for any considerable time resisted the attacks of Cyrus and his allies. *They set themselves in array against her, because she had sinned against the Lord—a standard was set up in the land—the nations were prepared against her*[h]*—the kingdoms of Arrarat, Minni, and Ashchenaz;*

[f] Newton, vol. i. p. 276.

[g] Jerom. l. 42. Xenophon mentions at large the great attention paid by Cyrus to the training his cavalry—a species of military force totally unknown in Persia before his time. To the superiority of his horsemen, he was chiefly indebted for his victory over Cresus; and the numerous troops of them, which he led to the siege of Babylon, are particularly described. Cyropæd. lib. i. lib. iv. p. 366. lib. vii. p. 632, 669. Edit. Zeunii.

[h] Jerem. li. 27.

[the

[the Armenians, Phrygians, and other neighbouring nations;] *and they appointed a captain against her.*

The vast dimensions of the celebrated capital of the East; the loftiness and strength of its walls and towers; its riches; the number of its inhabitants, and the ample means of their subsistence, in case of a tedious siege, supplied by large and cultivated fields, inclosed within the city, inspired Belshazzar and his subjects with the greatest confidence. Presuming that they could hold out against the most furious assaults, or the most tedious blockade of the enemy, they derided the operations of the Persians, and scoffed at their hostile attempts. *The mighty men of Babylon forbore to fight—they remained in their holds*[i].

Cyrus was employed for two years before the city; first, in an attempt to take it by storm; and next, in endeavouring to compel the Assyrians to surrender, by cutting off all foreign assistance. At length, tired with making these ineffectual attempts, Cyrus put a stratagem in execution, which rendered him master of the place. By the efforts of his

[i] Jerem. li. 30.

numerous

numerous army, he turned the course of the Euphrates into the spacious reservoir which Nitocris, the mother of Belshazzar, had caused to be dug to receive its waters while a stupendous bridge was building; and through the bed of the river he opened a passage for his forces into the midst of the city. *The deep was dry, and the rivers were dried up: a snare was laid for thee; thou wert taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware*[k].

He entered it in the night, when the inhabitants were celebrating a great and general feast, with every circumstance of conviviality and riot. *They prepared a table; they watched in the watch-tower; they eat and drank. They made their feasts, and their princes were made drunken*[l].

The hand-writing was seen by the astonished Belshazzar upon the wall of his palace; but *the astrologers stood up, and could not save him from those things that were come upon him*[m]. —The gates of the city, composed of solid brass, that led from the river to the streets,

[k] Jerem. l. 24. [l] Isaiah xxi. 5. Jerem. li. 57.
[m] Isaiah xlvii. 13.

were carelessly left open. "If the gates had not been left open," says Herodotus, "the Persians would have been shut up in the bed of the river, and taken as in a net, and all destroyed." Alarmed by the tumult occasioned by the approach of the invaders, Belshazzar ordered the gates of his palace to be opened, and sent persons to enquire into the cause. *The Lord opened before Cyrus the two-leaved gates, and the gates were not shut. One messenger ran to meet another, to shew the King of Babylon that his city was taken at one end*[n]. The troops of Cyrus seized the advantage, and rushing in, slew the monarch, and quickly gained complete possession of the city. *Therefore evil came upon her, she did not know from whence it arose; mischief fell upon her, and desolation came upon her suddenly, which she did not know. Her young men fell in the streets, and all her men of war were cut off in that day*[o].

The treasures taken by the conquerors were immense, as Babylon was the magazine of all the spoils of Judea, as well as of the other rich provinces of the East. *Chaldea was for*

[n] Isaiah xlv. 1. Jerem. li. 31. [o] Isaiah xlvii. 11.

a spoil,

a spoil, all that spoiled her were satisfied. A sword was upon her treasures, and they were robbed[p]. Here Crœsus gave an exact account of his riches, and surrendered all his vast possessions to Cyrus. Thus *the treasures of darkness, and hidden treasure of secret places were given to him by the God of Israel, who called him by his name*[q].

Soon after the taking of Babylon, Cyrus published a Decree, acknowledging that "the Lord God of heaven had given him all the kingdoms of the earth," and had appointed him to build the Temple at Jerusalem[r]; and *there-*

[p] Jerem. l. 10.

[q] Bossuet's Universal History, p. 442, 443. Prideaux, vol. i. p. 92, 93. Usser Annales, tom. i. p. 144. Xenophon's Cyropædia, lib. vii. Herodoti, lib. i. c. 190, 191. Jerem. l. li. 32, 36, &c. Dan. v. Berosus quoted by Josephus contra Apion. lib. i. c. 20. Eusebii Præp. Evang. l. ix. c. 40.

[r] Xenophon gives the following list of the nations conquered by Cyrus. The Syrians, Assyrians, Arabians, Cappadocians, both the Phrygians, Lydians, Carians, Phœnicians, and Babylonians. He moreover reigned over the Bactrians, Indians, Cilicians, the Sacæ, Paphlagones, and Mariandyni. Cyrop. lib. i. p. 4.

"Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, All the Kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem,

 which

therefore commanding all the people of Israel "to go up to Jerusalem, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel." Josephus[1] says, that Cyrus was shewn the Prophecy of Isaiah, wherein his name was expressly mentioned. It is probable that Daniel, who had obtained the highest reputation in the court of Babylon for his piety, and extraordinary wisdom, had not only shewn to the king the Prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, but had related to him the wonderful history of the people, "for whose sake he had been girded" with the sword of victory. It is evident from the remarkable words of the Decree ("he is the God") that the mind of Cyrus was sufficiently enlightened to understand, that there was but one Supreme God—*He* whom the Jews worshipped, and who spake in those

which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up." 2 Chron. xxxvi. 23.

"Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? His God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (he is the God) which is in Jerusalem." Ezra i. 2, 3.

[1] Josephus, Ant. Jud. lib. xi. c. 1.

holy

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holy books which were shewn him; though the opinions and habits, which prevailed in the Heathen world concerning the different gods which presided over different nations, might induce him to consider a species of inferior worship as allowable. The 70 years, predicted by the Prophets for the continuance of the captivity, were now accomplished. The captives were set free, and the precious vessels of gold and of silver, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought from Jerusalem, and had placed in the house of his gods, were restored by the munificent conqueror of the East, to the people whom he sent to their own land, by the especial direction of *their God.*

Thus did Cyrus, "the shepherd of the Lord, subdue nations before him, and perform all the pleasure of the Lord," by whom he had been named more than 100 years before his birth, as the instrument which should execute the designs of his Providence. Exactly at the time, and exactly in the manner predicted, he conquered the vast Assyrian Empire, and restored the people of Israel to their own land, where they again *inhabited Jerusalem, built the cities of Judah, and raised up the decayed places thereof. The house of God*

was builded, and the daily sacrifices were renewed.

Thus were the people re-established in their own land at the expiration of the allotted punishment for the transgression of that Law, which was ordained to continue till the Lord should raise up a Prophet "like unto Moses." And thus the partial dispersion of the people destined to preserve the promises of God, became the means of spreading the knowledge of the most High among the nations of the East, preparatory to the coming of the Messiah, to whom all nations were to be gathered.

CLASS

CLASS I.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

The Destruction and desolate State of Babylon considered as an awful Example of the Judgments of God upon the Enemies of his People.

THE Prophets point out various reasons, on account of which the Assyrians were made the signal objects of Divine Displeasure. Nebuchadnezzar was remarkable for excessive pride, and the most gross and intolerant idolatry, notwithstanding the certain information he received from his Jewish captives concerning the true God. Belshazzar his successor, equally well acquainted with the true religion, and a witness of the awful punishment which had been inflicted upon Nebuchadnezzar, preferred his false deities to Jehovah, the God of Israel, and profaned at his riotous feasts the consecrated vessels of the Temple.

The Babylonians were marked by blind superstition, practised various magical arts, and confided in the pretended discoveries of judicial astrology. Their vices far exceeded their credulity and their folly. They indulged in excessive luxury, were avaricious and arrogant, and oppressed the surrounding nations with excessive tyranny. Their cruelty was in a peculiar manner directed against the Jews. In their invasion of Judea, they laid the country waste, put both old and young to the sword, profaned the Temple, and detained all whom they led away captives in a state of the most rigid bondage. For these reasons, the denunciations of Divine vengeance were pronounced with particular severity against them.

We have seen the city of Babylon taken, and the "chosen people of God" delivered from bondage by Cyrus, "according to the sure word of Prophecy." We shall now survey this Metropolis of the World as it stood at the summit of its greatness, and follow it to the gulph of oblivion, from whence Prophecy and History recall its existence.

According to the most authentic accounts that have come down to us, Babylon contained the

the aſtoniſhing ſpace of ſixty miles, and was adorned in every part with gardens, palaces, and temples. Around it were extended walls of ſtupendous height and thickneſs, compoſed of large bricks cemented with bitumen, that by time acquired a ſolidity harder than ſtone. One hundred gates of ſolid braſs commanded the approaches to the city; two hundred and fifty towers of vaſt dimenſions and elevation were placed at equal diſtances along the walls. The buildings moſt remarkable for ſize and magnificence were, the bridge erected over the Euphrates, the ſpacious palaces of the Kings, and the antient temple of Belus, compoſed of eight towers, riſing one above another, and diminiſhing in proportion to their prodigious elevation. Such were the majeſtic edifices of this extenſive and populous capital of the Aſſyrian Empire; which, at a diſtance, to uſe the compariſon of antient writers, had the appearance of lofty mountains. They were calculated to brave the fierceſt attacks of hoſtile power, and to withſtand the ravages of remote ages.

The lofty terms in which Babylon is deſcribed in Scripture, correſpond with the account of profane writers. It is called by Iſaiah,

Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel, "the golden city," "the glory of kingdoms," "abundant in treasures," and "the praise of the whole earth[a]." Berosus, Herodotus, Strabo, and Diodorus Siculus, some of the most antient and most authentic writers, represent it as "the most glorious metropolis upon which the sun ever shone, and rank it high among the wonders of the antient world." At the precise time when it was rising to this state of grandeur, when the dominion of its sovereigns was spreading over all the surrounding provinces, and power, opulence, and prosperity combined to insure the long continuance of its empire and glory, Isaiah thus pronounced its total ruin[b].

And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the

[a] Isaiah xlvii. 5. xiv. 4. Jer. li. 41, &c. Goguet's Origin of Laws. Prideaux, vol. i. p. 75. Newton on the Prophecies, vol. i. p. 276, &c.

[b] Isaiah xiii. 19, 20, 21, 22. xiv. 23. For a more full anticipation of the destruction of Babylon, see Isaiah xiii, xiv, xxi, xlvii. In chap. xiii. the Medes, then an inconsiderable people, are brought forward as the great agents in the overthrow of the Assyrian Monarchy. Chap. xiv. contains the triumph of the various nations of the earth over the fallen King of Babylon. This description, consisting of the most bold and striking images, is truly sublime. See Lowth on Isaiah, xxi, xlvii.

beauty

beauty of the Chaldees excellency, ſhall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It ſhall never be inhabited, neither ſhall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither ſhall the Arabian pitch his tent there, neither ſhall the ſhepherds make their fold there. But wild beaſts of the deſert ſhall lie there, and their houſes ſhall be full of doleful creatures, and owls ſhall dwell there, and ſatyrs ſhall dance there. And the wild beaſts of the iſlands ſhall cry in their deſolate houſes, and dragons in their pleaſant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days ſhall not be prolonged.—I will alſo make it a poſſeſſion for the bittern, and pools of water; and I will ſweep it with the beſom of deſtruction, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.

A ſeries of ages was neceſſary to give this Prophecy its full accompliſhment. And if we carefully follow the ſtream of hiſtory, we ſhall find that a ſeries of ages has completely verified the awful menace of the Prophet.

The conqueſts of Cyrus extinguiſhed the glory of the Aſſyrian empire, and the ſplendor of Babylon was eclipſed by the removal of the ſeat of government to Suſa in Perſia. The waters of the Euphrates were never re-

ſtored

stored to their proper channel, from the new course which Cyrus had given them to facilitate his entrance into the city. *A drought was upon her waters, and they were dried up.*[c] By their stagnation the whole country became unwholesome, and assumed the form, and communicated the effects, of an extensive and pestilential morass. *The sea came up upon Babylon; she was covered with the multitude of the waves thereof*[d]. The immense slaughter of the inhabitants of the city was an additional cause of its decline and ruin. *All her men of war were cut off.* To punish the inhabitants for an insurrection, Darius Hystaspes, King of Persia, demolished the gates, reduced the height of the walls, and lessened the number of the citizens. Alexander the Great, indeed, formed the design of making it the seat of his empire; but death put a sudden stop to his intention. The rival city of Seleucia,

[c] Jerem. l. 38, &c.

[d] Jerem. li. 42. The sacred writers frequently use the word *sea* in a limited sense; they give it to great rivers, which, in consequence of their inundations, appear like seas. The country around Babylon which was watered by the Euphrates, is called the *desert of the sea*, Isaiah xxi. 1. Jer. li. 36. The same name is given to a lake. The Sea of Galilee is strictly the Lake of Galilee. Compare Matt. iv. 18. viii. 32. with John vi. 1, 18.

sometimes

ſometimes called by the name of Babylon, and erected upon the neighbouring banks of the Tigris, gradually drew away its inhabitants; and the city of Cteſiphon, afterwards built by the Perſian Kings, who ſucceeded the Macedonian empire, completed its ruin.

Herodotus, the moſt antient of the Greek hiſtorians, who viſited Babylon about a century and a half after the time of Cyrus, mentions, that even at that period the walls were in a great degree decayed[e]. Strabo, the accurate Geographer, who flouriſhed in the reign of Auguſtus, ſix centuries after the conqueſts of Cyrus, relates, that a great part of the city, once ſo ſplendid and populous, was then a mere deſert. Even then *her foundations were fallen, and her walls were thrown down.* Pauſanias, a celebrated Greek traveller and author, who flouriſhed in the third century after Chriſt, records, that of "Babylon, the greateſt city that the ſun ever ſhone

[e] The walls of Babylon were built partly of brick and bitumen, and partly of brick alone. The bricks were made upon the ſpot, and hardened in the ſun. When a wall of this ſort comes to be out of repair, and is neglected, in no long courſe of ages it muſt be totally deſtroyed by the heavy rains, and at length waſhed away, and reduced to its native earth. Lowth's Iſaiah, p. 95. Notes.

upon,

upon, nothing remained but some of its walls." Jerom, an eminent Father of the Church, in the following century saw it when reduced to ruins, and remarked, that the part of the walls which remained, served only as an inclosure for a royal park. Benjamin of Tudela, a learned Jew, in his Journal, written more than seven centuries ago, has recorded, that "Babylon was then laid waste, but that some remains might be traced of the royal palace of the antient Kings. Persons feared to approach too near to this spot, as it was infested by serpents and other venomous animals." *The wild beasts of the desert laid there, and the houses were full of doleful creatures*[f]. From the accounts of more modern travellers, it appears that the traces of this once magnificent city are become less and less visible. Rauwolf, a German, who travelled at the close of the sixteenth century, relates, that some parts of what he supposed to be the celebrated Tower of Belus, remained ruinous, low, and full of poisonous animals. Petrus Vallensis, a noble Roman, reported at the beginning of the seventeenth century, that a huge pile of ruins remained upon the same spot; and within fifty or sixty paces were traced

[f] Isai. xiii. 21.

some

some foundations of buildings. Succeeding travellers have asserted, that even the ruins were so much decayed as to leave very slight traces of the situation of the city. *Every one that goeth by is astonished to behold her that was queen among nations, now a wilderness, a dry* [or barren] *land, and a desert*[g]. *The daughter of Babylon has long sat in dust; there has been no throne for the queen of the Chaldeans. She has not been inhabited from generation to generation, except by the wild beasts.* The Almighty has executed his awful purpose declared by the mouth of his holy Prophets. *This great city has been swept with the besom of destruction*, and hardly a memorial of it remains but in the denunciations of the Prophetic writers, and in the accounts of their accomplishment.

The truth and clearness of these Prophecies concerning Cyrus and Babylon, and the corresponding historical facts, are so well known and so generally acknowledged, that a short statement of the principal circumstances has been deemed sufficient. Many other particulars relating to the siege of Babylon, the time

[g] Jer. l. 13, &c.

and

and manner of its reduction, and the various nations that joined in the *confederacy* against it, are mentioned by the Prophets, and confirmed with equal exactness by both sacred and profane historians. But, as the subject of the preceding is closely connected with that of the present Chapter, I shall beg permission to consider them together.

It may be remarked, that Cyrus, the generous deliverer of the Jewish people, was equally celebrated in profane and in sacred history, for his eminent virtues and extensive conquests. He was at once *the shepherd of the Lord* to gather his flock into their fold; and *the sword of his vengeance* against an impious nation, who had filled up the measure of their iniquities. The apostacy and wickedness of the children of Israel required especial correction; but to prove to them and to the world, that they were still under his peculiar care (as destined to fulfil the gracious designs of his Providence), and subjected to the power of an idolatrous nation by the *express appointment* of their God, and *not* by what is called the chance of war, or the superior force of the Assyrians, it pleased God to declare by his servants the Prophets, while his people

people dwelt in peace and ſafety, previous even to the threats of the King of Babylon, the *name of the nation* by whom their city and temple were to be deſtroyed, and themſelves conquered and carried away captive—the *time* when this event was to take place—the *term of years* during which their captivity was to laſt—and the *name* of their deliverer, *Cyrus*, by whoſe authority they ſhould be reſtored to their own land at the appointed time, with ſignal marks of favour, allowed to rebuild Jeruſalem, and afterwards to enjoy a period of ſecurity and happineſs. And, notwithſtanding the high improbability that a people ſo long and ſo perverſely addicted to idolatry, ſhould renounce the worſhip of idols, in a city where every enticement muſt have been offered: at a time too, when they *ſeemed* to be forſaken by their God, and when many of the viſible demonſtrations of his preſence were withdrawn—theſe people, it was alſo declared, ſhould remain for ever free from the ſin for which they had ſo ſeverely ſuffered; and faithful to the Law, which, after their reſidence in the capital of Aſiatic luxury and vice, it muſt have been more difficult to obey.

Is it possible to doubt this people's conviction of the Divine authority of the Law of Moses, and the Divine inspiration of their Prophets? Can any rational ground be assigned for this conviction, except the continuity of positive evidence?

Cyrus, who was thus to "proclaim liberty to the captive," and to "break their bonds in sunder," was also announced as the "scourge" of their oppressors. He was to "take the city of Babylon," and to "cast down the throne of the Chaldees." The mighty conqueror of the East was to "give glory to the God" of the obscure and captive children "of Israel," for the victories and the dominions he had obtained by his arms; and to "publish among the Gentile nations, the greatness and the power of the Lord Jehovah," whose name, from the success of the Babylonians against his chosen people, they had ignorantly blasphemed, and levelled with the imaginary deities of the numerous kingdoms, which had fallen victims to Assyrian tyranny.

Could any thing but absolute conviction of the truth of the wonderful history of the Jews, and demonstrative evidence of the accurate fulfil-

fulfilment of the Prophetic word of their God, have induced the enlightened Cyrus to ſend forth an edict for ſuch a purpoſe to the nations, who would probably eſteem it as derogatory to his own glory?

The fate of Babylon was diſtinctly pronounced at the ſame diſtance of time, and the cauſes of her exemplary puniſhment particularly explained as a warning to all generations, who are ſolemnly called upon to *remember* both the Prophecy and the Judgment againſt the city which had impiouſly "ſtriven againſt the Lord:"—"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none elſe; I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from antient times the things that are not yet done, ſaying, My counſel ſhall ſtand, and I will do all my pleaſure[h]."

"Sit thou ſilent, and get thee into darkneſs, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for thou ſhalt be no more called the lady of kingdoms. Behold, I am againſt thee, O deſtroying mountain, which deſtroyeſt the whole earth, for thou art proud againſt the Lord, againſt the

[h] Iſaiah xlvi. 9, 10.

Holy One of Israel. I was wroth with my people, I have polluted mine inheritance, and *given* them into thine hand, O *Assyrian, the rod of mine anger: howbeit thou meanest not so, nor doth thine heart think so, but it is in thine heart to destroy, and cut off nations not a few.*—Thou sayest, Are not my princes altogether kings—shall I not, as I have done to Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols?—Thou didst show my people no mercy, upon the antient hast thou very heavily laid the yoke, and thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever—Thou hast trusted in thy wickedness; thou hast said, None seeth me: *thy wisdom and thy knowledge it hath perverted thee, and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else besides me*—therefore shall evil come upon thee, thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee, thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee *suddenly*, which thou shalt not know—Thou didst not lay these things to heart, neither didst thou remember the latter end of it—Wherefore it shall come to pass, that *when* the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the stout heart of the King of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks; for he saith,

By

By the ſtrength of my hand I have done it, and by my wiſdom, for I am prudent—Shall the ax boaſt itſelf againſt him that heweth therewith?—Go up, O Elam; beſiege, O Media; all the ſighing which ſhe was the cauſe of have I made to ceaſe. Recompence her according to her work—becauſe it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance of his Temple—the day of the Lord is at hand, a day cruel with wrath and fierce anger to lay the land deſolate; behold I will puniſh the King of Babylon, as I have puniſhed the King of Aſſyria [in the deſtruction of Nineveh] I will cut off from Babylon the name and the remnant, from generation to generation ſhall it lay waſte[i]."

What a deſcription is this of the Preſcience, the Omnipotence, the retributive Juſtice, and the over-ruling Providence of God, directing all things, even the oppoſing ſprings of human action, to execute the uniform deſign of his unchanging will! Can the beſt wrought veil of Metaphyſics obſcure theſe radiant characters of Truth? Can the utmoſt ſtrength or art of Infidelity prevent their indelible impreſſion on the mind of unſophiſticated man, when thus united with the power of *Facts*?

[i] Iſaiah xlvii. 5. x. 5, &c.

CLASS I.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

The Appearance of the Messiah according to the precise Time predicted by Daniel 537 *Years before his Birth.*

DANIEL was favoured with many revelations of the Divine will, and supported by the Divine power in a very remarkable manner. He was honoured with the first distinctions in the court of Persia, and his piety and his wisdom were equally conspicuous. In one point he differs from all other Prophets, and becomes an object of attention peculiarly interesting to us; for to him alone was communicated the exact *time* when the Messiah would appear: and he likewise predicted the *time* of many of the principal events which were to take place after the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom, with such accuracy,

as

as to run parallel with the Revelation of St. John, and extend to the end of the world. In the following Prophecy we shall find the exact time of the manifestation of the Messiah clearly determined.

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall

make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate[a].

The leading circumstances to be considered in examining the accomplishment of this prediction, are, the completion of the time specified, and the events connected with it[b]. All agree that these 70 weeks are weeks of years, that is, every day in the week is reckoned as a year, which makes the whole number amount to 490 years. This computation is not unexampled in profane authors[c], and is used elsewhere in Scripture. It is used in reckoning the years of the Jubilee[d]—the time of sojourning in the wilderness[e], and in the Prophecy of Ezekiel[f]. These 70 weeks commence in the Jewish month Nisan, or March, in the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus, King of Persia, in the year of the world 3547, as is clearly shown by many accurate Chronologists, and proved at large by the learned Prideaux, in

[a] Daniel ix. 24, 25, 26, 27.
[b] Y. W. 3497. B. C. 537.
[c] See Apthorpe's Dissertations.
[d] Levit. xxv. 8.
[e] Numb. xiv. 34.
[f] Ezek. iv. 5, 6.

his

his Connexion of the History of the Old and New Testament with Profane History [s]. This was the distinguished year and month in which Ezra, the Leader of the Jews, obtained a commission for his return to Jerusalem, in order to restore the government of that city and the service of the Temple. And the 70 weeks were completed in the month Nisan in the year of the world 4037. This was the ever memorable year and month, when Jesus Christ, the Messiah, closed his Divine mission, and suffered death upon the cross.

It is evident that various events are predicted by Daniel in this remarkable Prophecy. *The Messiah shall be cut off—The people of the Prince that shall come, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary—Desolations are determined, and the sacrifice and the oblation shall cease for the overspreading of abominations.*

Now there are no occurrences in the Jewish history, to which these circumstances can be at all applied, except to the crucifixion of

[s] Prideaux, vol. i. p. 208. Bossuet, p. 228. Smith's Summary View, p. 165. Usser Annales, tom. i. p. 195. tom. ii. p. 568. Josephi Antiq. Jud. l. xi. c. 5. Gray's Key to the Old Testament, p. 414. Mede's Works, p. 857. Calmet's Dict. vol. i. p. 398.

Christ

Christ—the final destruction of the City and Temple of Jerusalem, and the desolation of Judea by the Romans. But to those great events the words of the Prophecy apply with such singular exactness, that they give a very energetic and lively description of them. And it may be farther observed, that this Prophecy very plainly delineates the spiritual purposes of the Gospel: for, at the completion of this great epoch of the 70 weeks, it is determined *to make reconciliation for iniquity—to bring in everlasting righteousness—and to seal up the vision and the prophecy*—Thus pointing out Christ, the Messiah, who died as the propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the world—rose again to certify that he had made atonement for sin, and had established the promised "kingdom of everlasting righteousness and life"—and *sealed up the vision and the prophecy* by his final revelation of the Divine will to his beloved disciple St. John, the *last* of the Prophets.

Three different periods of time are included within the 70 weeks, and each of them is connected with an important event—The *seven weeks* to restore and rebuild Jerusalem—the *threescore and two weeks* in addition to these seven weeks, after which the Messiah

was

was to be cut off;—and *the midst of the week*, in which he should cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease. The first series of seven weeks, being 49 years, relates to the restoration of the Jews, and the rebuilding Jerusalem, begun by Ezra, and completed by Nehemiah. The opposition which the Jews, when returned from captivity, met with from the Samaritans, prolonged this sacred work exactly for that period of time; and the obstacles with which they had to contend, fully confirmed the words of the prophet, that *the wall should be built in troublous times*. The threescore and two weeks that succeeded added to the foregoing seven, or in other words 483 years, bring the calculation of time down to the year 4739 of the Julian period, which was the exact year in which the Gospel began to be announced to the world—John the Baptist having been sent to prepare the Jews for its reception by his public ministry, which continued for the space of three years and a half. Its commencement at this period is accurately marked by the words of Christ, who said expressly, "the Law and the Prophets were until John, since that time the kingdom of God is preached[h]." And our Lord him-

[h] Luke xvi. 16.

ſelf, in the midſt of the week, *cauſed the ſacrifice and oblation to ceaſe;* for at that time, having completed the exerciſe of his divine miſſion in exactly the ſpace of three years and a half, he fulfilled the great object of the ceremonial Law, which was the type of atonement for ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf upon the croſs.

The facts thus predicted by Daniel will not agree with the ravages committed by Antiochus Epiphanes in Judea, great and atrocious as they were. He proceeded indeed to pollute the Temple, but he did not entirely deſtroy it; neither did he exhauſt Jeruſalem of all its inhabitants. The Jews at the cloſe of his wars were reſtored to peace,—but, on the contrary, at the period foretold by Daniel, the deſolation was to *begin*, and the city and ſanctuary were to be deſtroyed. So confident were the Jews, as to the preciſe application of the Prophecy, that this ſaying is ſtill extant in the Talmud, as the tradition of very ancient times[i]. "In Daniel is delivered to us the end of the Meſſiah;"—that is, the period at which he ought to come, as Jarchi, a celebrated doctor of the Law, explains it. Ne-

[i] Chandler's Defence, p. 116.

humias,

humias, likewise a learned Rabbi, who lived fifty years before the Christian era, declared, "that the time fixed by Daniel for the Messiah could not be more than fifty years before it was accomplished." Josephus observes[k], that "Daniel did not only predict things to come, which was common to him with other Prophets, but also a certain fixed *time* when they were to take place. He did not only foretel the calamity that afflicted our nation by Antiochus many years before it happened; but he also wrote of the dominion of the Romans, and of the great desolation they should hereafter bring upon Judea." In no passage, except in this Prophecy of the 70 weeks, does Daniel speak of the desolation which his country was to suffer from the Romans, and in no other passage is a precise time fixed for these events. We may therefore be confident, that Josephus referred to this particular Prophecy. And, indeed, it is acknowledged by the Jews themselves, that at the time when Jesus appeared, the Messiah was expected; and that the period, which Daniel had fixed, expired a short time before the City and Temple were destroyed by Titus—before the

[k] Joseph. Antiq. lib. x. c. 11.

customary

customary sacrifices were abolished—and before the Jewish government was overthrown[l].

How strong this expectation was among the Jews, and how general throughout the world, is evident from both sacred and profane historians. The Scriptures inform us, that at the precise time when our Saviour appeared, the Jews expected some person endowed with such qualities, and distinguished by such actions, as the sacred writers attribute to the Messiah. Not only Simeon, and Anna the Prophetess[m] "waited for the consolation of Israel," but many other devout persons were inspired with the same hope, and thought that the Kingdom of God was at hand. This expectation was not confined to the vulgar and illiterate; for as soon as John the Baptist began to preach, a deputation of

[l] Ferguson, the celebrated Astronomer, wrote a Treatise on the year of our Saviour's crucifixion. He illustrates this Prophecy of Daniel by applying to it the rules and calculations of his favourite science. He concludes his Treatise with the following words—"Thus we have an Astronomical demonstration of the truth of this antient Prophecy, seeing that the Prophetic year of the Messiah's being cut off was the very same with the Astronomical."

[m] Luke ii. 25, &c.

Priests

Priests and Levites was sent to ask him, whether he was the Christ[n]. When the people saw the miracles of our Lord, they concluded that their promised king would immediately be manifested[o].—And constantly cherishing the pleasing hope of his arrival, they asked the Scribes and Pharisees that remarkable question, "When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done[p]?"

Convinced by his wonderful works, many openly acknowledged, "this is in truth the Prophet who was to come into the world." The jealousy, which Herod entertained against Christ, proceeded from an apprehension that he would declare himself the expected King of the Jews; and Josephus expressly says[q], "That the chief motive, which instigated the Jews to rebel against the Romans, was, a Prophecy found in the Scriptures, that at that time a person should arise from their country, who should obtain the empire of the world." The Samaritans entertained the same hope, not so much derived from the Jews, whom they hated, as from the testimony of the

[n] John i. 19. [o] Luke xix. 11. [p] John vii. 31.
[q] Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. vii. c. 5.

Scriptures

Scriptures themselves, and the most antient traditions and interpretations of Scripture.

It is a very striking fact in proof of the general belief of the Jewish nation respecting the time of the Messiah's appearance, that from the death of Herod the Great, when Judas of Galilee and Simon first assumed the title of Kings and Deliverers of the Jews, to the destruction of the Temple, the Jewish history is filled with the names and actions of false Christs and false Prophets, who deceived both the Jews and the Samaritans—None appeared *before* this period, and not more than one for five or six centuries *after* it.

According as the Reader shall reject or admit the hypothesis concerning the religion of the eastern nations, which many learned authors [r] have laboured to establish, he will suppose the general expectation which prevailed among the heathen nations to owe its origin

[r] See Maurice's Indian Ant. and Hist. and Asiatic Researches, where the mass of evidence collected upon this curious and important subject will be found sufficiently strong to baffle the attacks of modern philosophy.

to

to the dispersion of Daniel's Prophecy by the Jews, or he will trace it to the patriarchal ages. The universality of this expectation would alone render it highly probable that the knowledge of Prophecy confirmed and corrected tradition, rather than produced it. But if it be granted, and I see not how it can be denied, that the hope of a Redeemer was given in the very earliest times, and continued to exist throughout the world, though obscured and deformed by allegory and idolatry, probability rises almost into certainty.

The confidence and eagerness with which the Pagans looked for this "mighty Prince, who was to restore the golden age," is scarcely to be accounted for upon the supposition, that they received the *first* intimation of this great event from the Jews, who were too much accustomed to interpret the promise of the Messiah as exclusively beneficial to themselves. But when, by the translation of the inspired writings into a language very generally understood, and by the increased intercourse among the learned of all countries, it was found that the Prophecies contained in the writings of this singular people (whose wonderful history must add authority to their

Scriptures) perfectly agreed with a tradition which had existed from the most remote antiquity, hope would gradually gain strength, and spread itself among the people. The particular information given by Daniel concerning the time when "the *Desire* of all nations" was to appear, would animate enquiry, and the general state of the world was calculated to heighten expectation. Thus the common belief asserted by the historians who wrote concerning this remarkable period, becomes clearly explicable—the worship of the Magi will cease to excite surprise,—and the dying injunction of Confucius in the distant regions of China, will no longer appear incredible. "A great Legislator—a mighty Conqueror, who was to deliver the world from evil—establish the kingdom of peace and bliss—renew the happiness of the golden age, and extend his auspicious dominion over the whole earth," are terms in which this expectation is expressed by many very antient authors*. And we find this subject particularly mentioned by the historians who wrote near the time of our Lord's appearance.

* Prideaux, vol. ii. p. 492. 1 Macc. iv. 46. xiv. 41. Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, part i. p. 18. Chandler's Defence, c. i. The Indian Vedas.

Julius

Julius Marathus, quoted by Suetonius in his Life of Octavius, mentions a Prophecy which then prevailed, that "Nature was about to bring forth a son, that should be King of the Romans[t]." It is true, *Flattery* applied this Prophecy to the Emperor; but she borrowed it from Public Opinion, drawn from a higher Source. Tacitus affirms[u], "that a persuasion prevailed with great numbers, that it was evident *from the antient books of the priests*, that at the time when Titus conquered the Jews, the East should have the pre-eminence, and *that those who came from Judea* should obtain the empire of the world." "An antient and general opinion (says Suetonius[x]) had very much prevailed over all parts of the East, that it was ordained by the fates, *for those who came from Judea* to obtain the supreme dominion." It should be observed, that Josephus, Tacitus, and Suetonius, were by no means inclined to favour the Christian

[t] This phrase expresses something more than ordinary both in the cause and the effect; for here nature herself, or the God of nature, is made the immediate agent of his birth; and *he* must far exceed the condition of mere humanity, who was to derive his origin from such a parent. Prideaux, vol. ii. p. 492.

[u] Taciti Hist. c. xiii. [x] In Vespasian, c. 4.

cause; and that their opportunities of being well informed rendered them fully competent to speak to the *Fact*—that this expectation *did* generally prevail at the precise time when Jesus Christ, the Messiah—the Prince—so particularly described by Daniel, was manifested to the world.

CLASS

CLASS I.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

The Promise of John the Baptist, the Messenger, or Forerunner of the Messiah, given 400 Years before his Birth.

BEHOLD, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's sope: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years. And I

will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts. For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Behold, I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse[a].

There can be no question concerning the application of this Prophecy to some person who was to be of Jewish extraction, and who was to appear before the destruction of Jerusalem, because this *messenger was to prepare the way for the Lord, who was to come suddenly to his Temple.* The disputes, whether this Temple was identically that which was built immediately after the Babylonish captivity, or whether it was rebuilt rather than

[a] Mal. iii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. iv. 5, 6.

repaired

repaired by Herod, are not material; it is enough for us to know that a Temple, dedicated to the worſhip of God according to the Moſaic inſtitutions, was ſtanding from the time of Malachi to the time of John the Baptiſt—that Jeſus was acknowledged by thoſe "who had waited for the promiſes of God," to be the Chriſt when firſt preſented in the Temple;—and that ſoon after the rejection of this Meſſiah by the Jews, this Temple was deſtroyed, and no other has ever been ſince rebuilt. In all the compaſs of the Jewiſh hiſtory for the intermediate ſpace of 400 years, no perſon can be found to whom this Prophecy can be applied with any degree of probability, except to John the Baptiſt, who appeared at the time which had been expreſsly marked for the coming of the Meſſiah, as we ſhall ſee in the following Chapter. To him it applies ſo cloſely as to point out with ſingular preciſion his office and character, and the ſubſtance of his precepts and exhortations.

There were many proofs ſufficiently clear to have ſatisfied all the Jews, if their prejudices had not been of the moſt ſtubborn nature, that a Prophet ſimilar to Elias, and not Elias himſelf, was intended to be announced

by Malachi. The angel ſent to Zecharias made a declaration to this purpoſe the moſt full and direct. At the time when he expreſsly ordained that the name of the promiſed child ſhould be *John*, he declared *as* expreſsly the nature of the commiſſion which he was to execute, in the very words of Malachi [b], "and he ſhall go before him [the Lord] in the ſpirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the diſobedient to the wiſdom of the juſt, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." When the diſciples of John came to Jeſus for complete ſatisfaction whether he was the expected Meſſiah or not, our Lord took occaſion to give the moſt full and illuſtrious teſtimony to the dignity of their maſter, and the moſt clear deciſion of the point in queſtion [c]. And after the glorious transfiguration of our Lord upon the mountain, when Moſes and Elias, or Elijah, the two greateſt Prophets under the Law, had held a divine conference with him, our Lord expreſsly affirmed, "Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him what-

[b] Luke i. 17.

[c] Matt. xi. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. Luke vii. 26, &c.

ſoever

ſoever they liſted." This alluſion is conſidered as ſufficiently plain, for it is immediately added by the ſacred hiſtorians, that "the diſciples underſtood that he ſpake of John the Baptiſt [d]."

The reſemblance between the office and character of the Elijah foretold by Malachi, and of John the Baptiſt as deſcribed in the Goſpels, is indeed exact. The Prophet declares that Elijah was to come *before the great and terrible day of the Lord*, which time has ever been underſtood to refer, in its primary ſenſe, to the complete deſtruction of Jeruſalem by the Romans. The Evangeliſts aſſert, that when John appeared, *the day of wrath was coming—the ax was laid at the root of the tree.* Malachi predicts that a meſſenger ſhall be ſent *to prepare the way of the Lord.* John exhorted the people to repent with more than common earneſtneſs, "*becauſe* the kingdom of heaven was at hand," or *immediately coming.* From this, and from other Prophecies [e], the Jews expected that Elias would be the precurſor of the Meſſiah, that he would publickly announce his approach, anoint him King, and introduce him to the people.

[d] Matt. xvii. 12, 13. [e] Iſaiah xl. 3.

John

John was the *voice crying in the wilderness, that one was coming mightier than himself, whose shoes he was not worthy to bear*[f]. In obedience to the request of Him whom he knew to be the Messiah, John baptized Jesus in the river Jordan, before he entered upon his public ministry, and testified in the presence of the assembled multitudes, that "he saw the spirit of God descending from heaven like a dove," (emblematic of the character of the Christian dispensation) "and that it rested upon *Him*," whom he declared to be "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world—the long-expected King of Israel—even the Son of the most High." It is evident then, that the particular nature of an office, or commission, and not the exact identity of a person, was the point which the Prophet Malachi had in view.

The testimony of the angel, and the declaration of Christ himself, explaining the nature of the mission of the Baptist, and shewing the strict reference of the Prophecies to him, agree precisely with his manner of life and general conduct.

[f] Matt. iii. 3, 11.

The

The external appearance of John, his unremitting auſterity of life, his active zeal, his bold rebuke of vice, and his exhortation to the degenerate race of his countrymen, to repent of their ſins, that they might avoid impending judgments, were circumſtances perfectly ſimilar to the hiſtory of Elias. It is therefore *alſo* evident, that the Prophecy of Malachi was fully accompliſhed in the perſon of John the Baptiſt, the meſſenger, or forerunner of the Meſſiah, who, in conformity with the eaſtern cuſtom of officers being ſent to announce the approach of princes and kings, preceded him, and prepared the way for his reception [g].

I muſt be allowed to requeſt the Reader's particular attention to this laſt link of the

[g] The teſtimony of Joſephus to the character of John the Baptiſt agrees with the prophecy of Iſaiah and Malachi, and the narratives of the Evangeliſts. "Herod put to death John the Baptiſt, who was a juſt man, and had called upon the Jews to be baptized and to practiſe virtue, exerciſing both juſtice towards men, and piety towards God. And many coming to him, for they were wonderfully taken with his diſcourſes, Herod was ſeized with apprehenſions, leſt by his authority they ſhould be led into ſedition. The Jews were of opinion that the deſtruction of Herod's army was a puniſhment upon him for putting the Baptiſt to death." Lardner's Jewiſh Teſt. vol. vii. p. 116.

chain

chain of Prophets, which reached from Moſes to Malachi, as one of the many circumſtances to prove the gradual preparation made for the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt.

During the interval of 400 years between this laſt Prophecy under the Old Diſpenſation, and its fulfilment, the ſecond Temple was indeed ſtanding, but it could not boaſt the viſible glory of Jehovah, like that which had diſtinguiſhed the firſt. There were no appointed means of enquiring the will of God by means of the High Prieſt. The people obſerved the Law of Moſes, but no Prophet aroſe among them. They were ſufficiently enlightened to look for their predicted Meſſiah with a degree of anxiety and impatience, that might have weakened their attachment to the Covenant, which it appeared to be the pleaſure of God to alter, if not to abrogate. And the ſeries of the Prophets cloſed with a direct promiſe of a "meſſenger in the ſpirit and power of Elias," (who had been moſt diſtinguiſhed by viſible marks of the Divine favour) to precede the Lord, who ſhould come ſuddenly to his Temple—who ſhould be like a refiner's fire to purify his people in his great and dreadful day, when all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly ſhall be ſtubble, and

ſhall

ſhall be burnt up[h]. "But to thoſe who fear the name of God, he ſhould ariſe as the Sun of Righteouſneſs, with healing in his wings, to make his name great among the Gentiles, that in every place incenſe ſhould be offered to the name of God, and a pure offering[i]."

[h] Mal. iii. 2. [i] Mal. iv. 2.

CLASS

CLASS I.

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

The Prophetic Deſcription of the Birth, Character, Miſſion, Sufferings, Death, Reſurrection, and Aſcenſion, of the Meſſiah, compared with his Hiſtory written by the Evangeliſts after his Aſcenſion into Heaven.

SO clear and ſo full are the declarations of Iſaiah relative to the coming of the Meſſiah, the nature of his kingdom, and the benefits reſulting to mankind from its eſtabliſhment, that he has with very great propriety been called the Evangelical Prophet. One of his predictions in particular can never be too frequently brought forward, as an inſtance of a revelation of the Divine will directed to one uniform courſe of circumſtances and events. The regularity of its plan is unbroken, it is complete in its various parts, and it ſtands detached from other ſubjects. It is a ſtriking picture,

picture, of which the outlines are ſtrongly marked, and the colours are natural and lively. The form of expreſſion is remarkable, for the Prophet ſpeaks of things to come, as if they were either preſent or paſt. Fully occupied by the importance of his ſubject, and carried forward to diſtant times, he flies over the interval between the prediction and its fulfilment, and writes in the manner of an exact and faithful hiſtorian.

He is deſpiſed and rejected of men; a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our ſorrows: yet we did eſteem him ſtricken, ſmitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, he was bruiſed for our iniquities: the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him; and with his ſtripes we are healed. He was oppreſſed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a ſheep before her ſhearers is dumb, ſo he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from priſon and from judgment: and who ſhall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgreſſion

gression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors: and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors [a].

This Prophecy is an exact anticipation of some of the most remarkable circumstances relating to the life and death of Christ, and the great benefits of his passion. And to prove that it was literally accomplished in our Saviour, we need only bring together the

[a] Isaiah liii. 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

parallel

parallel passages in the prophetic and in the historic writings [b].

He was despised and rejected of men, for, as he himself declared, "the son of man had not where to lay his head; and though he had done so many miracles, yet the greater part of the Jews believed not on him."—*He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;* for "he wept at the tomb of Lazarus, mourned the approaching destruction of Jerusalem, and expressed continual sorrow for the sins and distresses of mankind." "And his soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death [c]; and being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground [d]."—*Surely he hath borne our griefs;* for "he was delivered for our offences, and

[b] John xii. 37. Matt. viii. 16. Rom. iv. 25. Gal. i. 4. 1 Pet. ii. 24. 1 Tim. ii. 6. Matt. xxvi. 63. xxvii. 38. 1 Pet. ii. 22. 2 Cor. v. 21. Rom. v. 18. Matt. xxvii. 57, 58. Col. ii. 15. Mark xv. 27. Heb. vii. 25.

I refer the Reader for some excellent remarks on this Prophecy, to Paley's Evidences, vol. ii. p. 1. It is much to be wished, that this very able Divine had applied the acuteness of his penetration, and the peculiar vigour of his understanding, to a full elucidation of this important part of his subject.

[c] Matt. xxvi. 38. [d] Luke xxii. 44.

was raised again for our justification."—*He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities*, for "he gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world."—*The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed*, for "his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness.—*The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all*, for "he gave himself a ransom for all."—*He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth.* When brought before the High priest, "Jesus held his peace."—*He was cut off out of the land of the living*, for "he was crucified in the flower of his age." *He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death*, for "when the evening, after his crucifixion, was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, and begged the body of Jesus, and laid it in his own new tomb."—*He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth*, for "he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."—*His soul was made an offering for sin*, for "God made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin."—*By his knowledge did the righteous servant (or son) justify many*, for "by the righteousness of one, the free gift came

came upon all men unto justification of life." —*He divided the spoil with the great*, for "having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them."—*He was numbered with the transgressors*, for "with him they crucified two thieves."—*He made intercession for the transgressors*, for "he is able to save sinners, to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Struck by the exact application of this passage to the character and sufferings of Christ, the devout Eunuch of Ethiopia listened to the explanatory narrative of St. Philip [e], and became a zealous convert to the faith. In this instance the power of Prophecy, as one great evidence of the truth of Christianity, was eminently displayed. And I cannot help reminding the Reader of another instance in the case of a profligate nobleman of this country, who in the last century was infamous for his vices, and exemplary for his repentance. Upon the bed of death, he listened with eager curiosity to the pious Prelate, who illustrated to him this remarkable pas-

[e] Acts viii. 26.

sage of Isaiah, and died a true believer in an afflicted and persecuted Saviour[f].

The coming of the Messiah and the nature of his kingdom, as we have before observed, form the leading subjects of prophetical inspiration. "The testimony of Jesus is clearly and most eminently the spirit of Prophecy[g]." To him all the Prophets give witness, and around him they throw the beams of their united light. As a proof of the truth of this assertion, we shall now select some scattered predictions, that mark with as great exactness certain nice and discriminating circumstances relative to the promised Messiah; and subjoin to each of them those extracts from the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles, which show their completion.

The Prophet Micah points out the place where the Messiah was to be born, and the tribe from which he was to spring[h]. But

[f] See Bishop Burnet's Life of Lord Rochester, which, Dr. Johnson observed, "the critic ought to read for its elegance, the philosopher for its arguments, and the saint for its piety."

[g] Revelation xix. 10.

[h] For these Prophecies, and their correspondent completion, the Reader is referred to Micah v. 2. Matt. ii. 1. Heb. vii. 14.

thou

thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel. All the evangelists mentioned that Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea; and that such was an undoubted fact, St. Paul informs us when he asserts, "that it is evident our Lord sprang out of Judah."

Isaiah declares[1] that he shall be descended from David, and be born of a pure virgin. *A virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel—There shall come a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, and the Spirit of wisdom and understanding.* The descent of Joseph, the reputed father, and of Mary the Mother of our Lord, is regularly traced from David the son of Jesse, by the Evangelists. "Mary was found with child by the Holy Ghost.—When Jesus was baptized by John in the river Jordan, the Spirit of God descended like a dove, and lighted upon him." His life and doctrine fully showed that the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, did indeed rest or remain with

[1] Isaiah vii. 14. Matt. i. 20. Luke iii. 23. Matt. iii. 16.

him always, "for it was not given unto him by measure."

Rising to a loftier strain of description, Isaiah represents the dignity of his nature and attributes, and among other appropriate epithets, gives him one that peculiarly marks the mild and heavenly purpose of his Gospel[k]. *Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.*—Thus our Saviour himself instructs Nicodemus, "that God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son;" and St. Paul declares what is indeed proved by the whole tenor of Evangelical History, "that God hath in these last times spoken unto us by his Son." He declares likewise, "that Christ is the wisdom of God and the power of God—that he is our peace, and the Lord of peace himself—the image of the invisible God—that he is before all things, and by him all things consist—the brightness of his Father's glory, and the ex-

[k] Isaiah ix. 6. John iii. 16. Heb. i. 2. Ephes. ii. 14. 1 Cor. i. 24. Col. i. 15. 17. 20. 2 Thess. iii. 16. Heb. i. 3.

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preſs image of his perſon." The Evangeliſts [1] aſſert, that the voice heard from heaven, when our Lord was baptized in the river Jordan, declared, "This is my beloved Son." The government was given to him, for he caſt out evil ſpirits, he overruled the Laws of nature by his miraculous power—and "he had all power given unto him both in heaven and earth." At his birth the angels, in their ſong of triumph, declared "peace on earth and good will towards men," thus celebrating his high and gracious office, as Redeemer of a ſinful world, and marking the characteriſtics of the mild and benevolent religion he came to eſtabliſh.

Iſaiah likewiſe ſpecifies the particular kinds of miracles by which the divine origin of the Chriſtian Revelation ſhould be proved.

Then the eyes of the blind ſhall be opened, and the ears of the deaf ſhall be unſtopped. Then ſhall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb ſing [m]. The following words of Chriſt, when ſpeaking particularly

[1] Matt. iii. 17. Iſaiah xix. 6. Matt. xxviii. 18. Luke ii. 14.

[m] Iſaiah xxxv. 5, 6. Matt. xi. 5.

of his miracles to the disciples of John, and which plainly refer to the Prophecies, are confirmed by the Gospels, in the fullest manner: "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up."

The reward given by the High Priests to Judas the betrayer, is exactly specified by Zechariah [n]. *They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.* Thus the Evangelists relate, that "Judas Iscariot went unto the chief Priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver."

The cruel and most undeserved treatment, which he suffered previous to his death, is thus mentioned by Isaiah [o]. *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.* It is particularly recorded, "that they did spit in his face, and buffet him, and that others smote him with the palms of their hands."

[n] Zech. xi. 12. Matt. xxvi. 15.

[o] Isaiah l. 6. Matt. xxvi. 67.

His

His particular kind of death, by being nailed to a cross, is described by David [p], *They pierced my hands and my feet.* And the Evangelists say expressly, that "the Jews crucified him."

And the particular kind of drink that was offered him is mentioned likewise by David [q]. *They gave me also gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.* The Evangelists relate, that "they gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall."

And the manner likewise, in which his garments were adjudged to the soldiers who attended his execution, is exactly stated in the Psalms [r]. *They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.* Thus in the Gospel it is particularly mentioned, "that they parted his raiment and cast lots for his coat, as it was without seam, and woven from the top throughout."

The manner of his interment is foretold by Isaiah [s]. *That he should make his grave with*

[p] Psalm xxii. 16. Matt. xxvii. 35.
[q] Psalm lxix. 21. Matt. xxvii. 34.
[r] Psalm xxii. 18. John xix. 23.
[s] Isaiah liii. 9. Matt. xxvii. 57, 58.

the

the rich. Thus "a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, took the body of Jesus, and laid it in his own new tomb."

That he should rise again, without being subject to decay, is the glorious declaration of the Psalmist[t]. *For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption.* Thus the angel assures the woman, "that Jesus which was crucified is risen as he said." David spake of the resurrection of Christ, "whom God raised up, whereof," said St. Peter when he applied this Prophecy to our Lord, "we are all witnesses."

The manner in which the Evangelists shewed the fulfilment of the prophecies by Christ is remarkable, for they applied them not with hesitation, as if they were doubtful as to their sense, or undecided as to their object. Their boldness of assertion bore the stamp and character of truth. They had the most clear proofs, more particularly from miracles, that their divine Master was the promised Messiah, and therefore were fully persuaded that all the prophecies centered in him. They appear

[t] Psalm xvi. 10. Matt. xxviii. 6. Acts ii. 31, 32.

to

to have had no conception, that this evidence could in the nature of things be referable to any one else, and therefore they pressed the arguments drawn from the Old Testament upon the minds of the unconverted, with all the sincerity of conviction, and all the authority of truth.

All persons are encouraged, by the gracious example of our Lord himself, to seek the light, and the evidence thus brought to illustrate the character, and the mission of Christ, the Messiah of the Jews, and the Saviour of the world. For, when he was about to take his final leave of his Disciples after his resurrection, and was desirous of pointing out to them the clearest testimonies, that, in addition to his miracles and his precepts, could confirm his divine mission, "BEGINNING AT MOSES AND ALL THE PROPHETS, HE EXPOUNDED UNTO THEM IN ALL THE SCRIPTURES, THE THINGS CONCERNING HIMSELF[n]."

[n] Luke xxiv. 27.

CLASS

CLASS I.

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

The Destruction of the City and Temple of Jerusalem, and the Subversion of the Jewish Government according to the Prediction of Christ.

THE awful catastrophe of the destruction of Jerusalem, was a subject presented to the minds of the most distinguished Prophets. Moses saw, from a remote distance of time, the peculiar calamities that would result from the disobedience of his people. And to close the wonderful series of predictions, our Lord denounced in terms of pity and affection the approaching fall of the holy city, and fixed the period of its complete destruction, and the total subversion of the Jewish government. Upon this signal event the authority of Christ as a Prophet very materially depended;

pended; and as it took place within the time he prescribed, with all its previous, concomitant, and subsequent circumstances, exactly as he had foretold, the whole train of occurrences conspired to prove his infallible truth.

This Prophecy, which must fill every mind that considers it attentively with the most exalted conceptions of its divine author, forms an essential part of the Gospel history, and is interwoven with the texture of its most important contents. It is recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke. In regard to the precise year in which their respective Gospels were written, there is a difference of opinion among the learned [a]; but it is universally agreed that they were all written and published some years *before* the destruction of Jerusalem. And it is probable that these Evangelists were dead before that event took place. No unbeliever,

[a] The earliest account I have met with is that of Dr. Owen, who states the Gospel of St. Matthew to have been written A. D. 38. The latest account brings it down to A. D. 63. St. Mark wrote his Gospel about the year 61. St. Luke a little after, probably in 63. Percy's Key, p. 47. Calmet, vol. ii. p. 155. Du Pin's History of the Canon, vol. ii. p. 26, 41, &c. Townson on the Gospels, p. 4, 116, 153, 166, &c.

either

either of antient or modern times, Jew or Gentile, neither Julian, nor Celsus, nor Porphyry, neither Voltaire, nor Gibbon, has ever had the temerity to insinuate, much less to maintain, that it was forged, or interpolated after the event.

It appears from the narrative of St. Mark, that our Lord's declaration concerning the buildings of the Temple, "There shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down," had excited considerable alarm and anxiety among his followers; and that as soon as he was seated on the Mount of Olives, whither he immediately went, four of his Disciples privately entreated him to give them farther information relative to "the *time* when all these things should be fulfilled, and the *signs* which should precede their accomplishment." The parallel passages in Matthew and Luke plainly indicate that this enquiry respected the destruction of Jerusalem, the Second Coming of our Lord, and the End of the world—events which they possibly expected to happen together—and to which the reply of our Lord evidently refers.

The Mount of Olives commanded a full view of the City and the Temple, the grandeur,

deur, the magnificence, and the ſtriking ſituation of which, as circumſtantially deſcribed by Joſephus [b], muſt have rendered this ſpot peculiarly

[b] For the facts which ſhow the completion of this Prophecy, we are not confined to the ſtatement of Chriſtian writers alone, who by unbelievers might be ſuſpected, however uncandidly, of a diſpoſition to bend the events to the predictions. We are happily in poſſeſſion of the moſt curious and valuable ſource of information. So far from rejecting the teſtimony of *Jewiſh* writers upon this ſubject, which they might naturally be diſpoſed to repreſent in a manner honourable to their own nation, and diſadvantageous to the character of Chriſt, we appeal to the evidence of the Hiſtorian Joſephus, who was remarkably diſtinguiſhed by his attachment to his country, and his veneration for the Laws of Moſes. He was deſcended from the family who bore the ſacred office of High Prieſt, he was a diſtinguiſhed General in the early part of the laſt Jewiſh war; and after he was taken priſoner, was admitted to ſhare the confidence of the Emperor Veſpaſian and his ſon Titus, with whoſe approbation, as well as that of Kings Agrippa and Herod, and other eminent and intelligent perſons, he publiſhed the Hiſtory of the Wars of the Jews. His evidence is moſt full, particular, and exact, and goes to the confirmation of every point in this Prophecy. With ſingular care he has omitted to mention the name of Chriſt, and yet with ſingular preciſion he has illuſtrated his predictions. From his ſituation as a General in the former part of the war, and a priſoner in the latter, when he was conſtantly with the Roman commander, nothing eſcaped his obſervation. No perſon who poſſeſſes the leaſt degree of candour, whatever may be his religious opinions, can have any fair objection to his teſtimony. None

liarly suited to the subject of this Prophecy. And in this sublime and interesting scene did our

None can plead, that he has given a false colouring to his narrative, for the purpose of favouring Jesus Christ and his Disciples. The important service he has rendered to Christianity is wholly unintentional. Considering his various escapes from the most imminent danger, and the particular crisis at which he lived, he seems to have been raised up and preserved by Providence, to show the exact accomplishment of the Prophecy of Christ. If he was ignorant of Christianity, he could not possibly write with a view to promote its interests. If he was not ignorant of it, we may be certain from his strong attachment to the Laws of Moses, and from his silence, that he was not favourable to it—so that what he relates, is drawn from him by the power of irresistible truth; and is a testimony far more strong, and more unexceptionable, than the most explicit mention of the name of Christ, and the most laboured encomium on his words and actions. For a full account of Josephus and his works, see Lardner, vol. vii. p. 30, 259, &c.

The curious details of Josephus are confirmed in many important circumstances, by Tacitus the eminent Historian, who flourished about thirty years after the destruction of Jerusalem. He speaks of the strength of the fortifications of that city, the immense riches and strength of the Temple, the factions that raged during the siege, the prodigies that preceded it, and the report prevalent at that time, that a ruler of the world should come from the East. He particularly mentions the large army brought by Vespasian to subdue Judea, and take Jerusalem, a fact which shows the magnitude and the importance of the expedition.

Other

our Lord fully reveal to his ſelect Diſciples thoſe decrees of Divine juſtice, which he had frequently before, in general terms, pronounced in the preſence of ſurrounding multitudes [c]. The divine character of the perſon who

Other Heathen authors may be mentioned, whoſe account of theſe tranſactions is very much to the purpoſe. The moſt remarkable are Philoſtratus and Dion Caſſius, who lived in the third century. By the former it is expreſsly related, that Titus declared after the capture of Jeruſalem, that he was not worthy of the crown of victory, as he only had lent his hand to the execution of a work, in which God was pleaſed to manifeſt his anger. It does not appear that Philoſtratus copied Joſephus, as he relates ſome things in a different manner. The account of Dion Caſſius, when compared with that of the great Jewiſh hiſtorian, is conciſe and defective. Nevertheleſs, he relates all the principal tranſactions of the war—the conqueſt of Judea by Titus and Veſpaſian, the obſtinate and bloody reſiſtance of the Jews during the ſiege of Jeruſalem, and what is of moſt importance, the deſtruction of the Temple by fire.

In theſe particulars he agrees with Joſephus, in others he differs from him ſo much, that it is very probable he never conſulted his works—In Dion Caſſius and Philoſtratus we have two witneſſes unacquainted with Joſephus, who ſtrongly confirm his teſtimony, and unite to illuſtrate the Prophecy now under our conſideration. See Lardner's Teſt. vol. vii. p. 112. vol. viii. p. 131.

[c] Lardner has well remarked, that this Prophecy, although delivered in private to the Diſciples, plainly referred to many of our Lord's public ſpeeches, Matt. xxiii. 29—39. Luke xix. 41—44. There are likewiſe frequent

who uttered this prediction, the clear language in which it was expressed, the solemn manner in which it was confirmed, the people who were the immediate subjects of it, the unparalleled calamities denounced against them, and its ultimate reference to the consummation of the stupendous Christian scheme, which was laid "before the foundations of the world"—has been "witnessed by all the Prophets from the beginning"—and shall extend beyond this world's duration—render the whole transaction inexpressibly interesting and awful.

I shall quote the whole Prophecy as stated by the three evangelists, and only first observe, that whoever carefully reads this Prophecy, not only reads an exact recital of subsequent events, but finds them arranged nearly in the same order of time in which they happened.

His Disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily

quent references to the calamities that were coming upon the Jews in several parables, Matt. viii. 11, 12. xxi. 18, 19, &c. xxii. 1—7. Luke xiii. 6—9. xiv. 17—24.

I say

I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the Disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth let him understand) then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains: let him which is on the house-top not come down to take any thing out of his house. Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath-day: for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall rise false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very elect. Behold I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

For

For wherefoever the carcafe is, there will the eagles be gathered together[d].

And as he went out of the temple, one of his Difciples faith unto him, Mafter, fee what manner of ftones, and what buildings are here! And Jefus anfwering, faith unto him, Seeft thou thefe great buildings? There fhall not be left one ftone upon another, that fhall not be thrown down—When fhall thefe things be? — And Jefus anfwering them, began to fay, Take heed left any man deceive you: for many fhall come in my name, faying, I am Chrift; and fhall deceive many. And when ye fhall hear of wars, and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for fuch things muft needs be; but the end fhall not be yet. For nation fhall rife againft nation, and kingdom againft kingdom; and there fhall be earthquakes in divers places, and there fhall be famines and troubles: thefe are the beginnings of forrows. But take heed to yourfelves: for they fhall deliver you up to councils; and in the fynagogues ye fhall be beaten: and ye fhall be brought before rulers and kings for my fake, for a teftimony againft them. And the Gofpel muft firft be publifhed among all nations. But when they fhall lead you, and deliver you up,

[d] Matt. xxiv.

take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost. Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains: and let him that is on the house-top not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take any thing out of his house: and let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment. But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter. For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation, which God created, unto this time, neither shall be. And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days. And then, if any man shall say to you, Lo, here

is Christ; or, lo, he is there; believe him not: for false Christs and false Prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. But take ye heed: behold I have foretold you all things[e].

And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass? And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by. Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights, and great signs shall there be from hea-

[e] Mark xiii.

ven. But before all these they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls. And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive

into

into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled[f].

We now proceed to show the fulfilment of the most striking parts of this Prophecy.

Many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near.

Many indeed were the impostors, who either impiously assumed the name of Christ, or the character of inspired Prophets. Josephus[g] relates, that in the reign of Claudius "the land was overrun with magicians, impostors, and seducers, who drew the people after them in multitudes into solitudes and deserts, to see the signs and miracles they promised to show by the power of God." Felix, and afterwards Festus, governors of Judea, judging these proceedings to be the commencement of rebellion against the Romans, continually sent out detachments of soldiers, and destroyed great numbers of the deluded populace. Among these impostors were Dositheus the Samaritan, who affirmed that he was the Christ foretold by Moses;

[f] Luke xxi.
[g] Antiq. Jud. lib. xx. c. 8.

Simon

Simon Magus, who said that he appeared among the Jews as the Son of God: and Theudas[h], who pretending to be a Prophet, persuaded many of the people to take their goods and follow him to the river Jordan, declaring that he was divinely commissioned; and that at his command the waters would be divided, and give them a safe passage to the opposite side. Many other examples might be adduced; but these are sufficient to establish the truth of this prediction.

But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions (or rumours of wars), be not terrified; for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not yet.

These wars and commotions were as the distant thunder, that forebodes approaching storms. Previous to the destruction of Jerusalem the greatest agitation prevailed in the Roman Empire, and the struggle for succession to the imperial throne was attended by severe and bloody conflicts. Four Emperors, Nero, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, suffered violent deaths within the short space of eighteen months. The Emperor Caligula

[h] Antiq. Jud. lib. xx. c. 4.

com-

commanded the Jews to place his ſtatue in their Temple; and in conſequence of a poſitive refuſal to comply with ſo impious a requeſt, he threatened them with an invaſion, which was prevented by his death. *The end is not yet*; for theſe events, alarming as they ſeemed, were only the preludes to the dreadful and tumultuous ſcenes that followed.

For nation ſhall riſe againſt nation, and kingdom againſt kingdom.

As theſe denunciations of our Lord were particularly referable to the Jews, we look of courſe to Judea, and the places where the Jews were reſident, for their accompliſhment. Not to mention other inſurrections and acts of national hoſtility, it may be remarked, that at the time of the Paſſover in the year 49, when Cumanus was Procurator of Judea, there happened a violent tumult in Jeruſalem, in which many thouſands of its inhabitants were ſlain. In Ceſarea, Scythopolis, Aſcalon, Alexandria, and Damaſcus, there were the greateſt popular diſorders, and multitudes of the Jews were ſlain by the Tyrians and Syrians. Joſephus, when ſpeaking of this time, ſays, "Every city was divided into two armies."

And

And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences, and fearful sights, and signs from heaven.

The history of this period is replete with instances of terrible presages of Divine vengeance. In the fourth year of the reign of Claudius, a dreadful famine began, that extended throughout the Roman empire, and was most severely felt in Judea for several years. The Christian Gentile converts, moved by the exhortations of St. Paul, sent liberal contributions for the relief of their Jewish brethren. And Helena, Queen of Egypt, sent a large supply of corn from that country, to alleviate the general distress. A particular account of this calamity is given by Josephus[i], who affirms, that many of his countrymen perished for want of food; and also by Eusebius, Orosius, and Suetonius. Several historians mention the ravages of *pestilence*; but the terror occasioned by the uncommon *earthquakes in divers places*, leads them to a more detailed account of the fulfilment of this prediction. Philostratus, in his Life of Apollonius[k], mentions the violent earthquakes

[i] Ant. Jud. lib. xx. c. 2.

[k] Lib. iv. c. 34.

which

which happened in the reign of Claudius at Crete, Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, Samos, and other places, in all of which Jews were settled. Tacitus[l] mentions one at Rome in the same reign, and says, that in the reign of Nero, the cities of Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse, were overthrown. Another earthquake is mentioned by Suetonius, which happened at Rome in the reign of Galba. Josephus[m] relates, that in Judea at the beginning of the war, but before Jerusalem was besieged by Titus, there was such an uncommonly tremendous storm of wind, and thunder, and lightning, with "a fearful noise of the agitated earth, as portended, in the opinion of many, the greatest evils." Many prodigies are recorded by the historians of those times, of a much more strange and extraordinary nature[n], which, whether they actually happened or not, fully prove that the imagina-

[l] Ann. lib. xiv. c. 27. lib. xv. c. 22.

[m] Bell. Jud. lib. iv. c. 4.

[n] So wonderful were these prodigies, that Josephus not only mentions them particularly in the beginning of his account of the wars of the Jews, but in the course of his narrative assigns a whole chapter to them, lib. vii. c. 12. Lardner examines them, and weighs their probability with his usual caution and accuracy, vol. vii. p. 89, &c.—I have selected those only, in which Josephus and Tacitus agree.

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tion of the people was singularly impressed with a belief that they really happened; and it might be said, that our Lord's prediction was thus fulfilled. Considering, however, the frequent miraculous appearances of particular interposition in the course of nature, by which it pleased the Almighty to manifest to his chosen people his protection and displeasure, it cannot be deemed improbable, that *some* of these *signs were indeed from heaven.*

But before all these things they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.—And some of you shall they cause to be put to death.

The precision with which the time is specified is very remarkable. Previous to the other prognostics of the destruction of Jerusalem, the disciples of Christ were taught to expect the hardships of persecution. The Acts of the Apostles show how exactly this prediction was fulfilled[a]. St. Paul acknowledges

[a] Acts iv, vi, vii, viii, xii, xxi, xxviii. 2 Cor. xi. 23. Heb. x. 32. 2 Thes. i. 4. James ii. 6. The Apostles and

ledges that it had been his frequent cuſtom previous to his converſion, "to puniſh, and to beat in the ſynagogues thoſe that believed." St. Peter and St. John boldly confeſſed the faith before Annas and Caiaphas. St. Paul related the particulars of his miraculous converſion in the preſence of the High Prieſt, and with the greateſt intrepidity pleaded his cauſe at the tribunal of the trembling Felix, and the half-converted Agrippa. St. Stephen confounded the oppoſition of the Sanhedrim, by the eloquence of his defence, and his forcible appeal to the Prophecies; and laid down his life in atteſtation of the truth, before multitudes of adverſaries. And under Nero a more dreadful and general perſecution took place, in which St. Peter and St. Paul ſuffered as martyrs for the faith. This proſpect of perſecution, treachery, and death, muſt indeed have overpowered the minds of the Diſciples, if their divine Maſter had not at the ſame time given them an abſolute pro-

and many converts were beaten by the Jews, Acts v. 40. xxii. 19. Paul was five times ſcourged by the Jews, and thrice beaten with rods, 2 Cor. xi. 24, 25. James was ſlain with the ſword, Acts xii. 2. The Epiſtle to the Hebrews ſeems evidently to have been written in a great degree to comfort Chriſtians under perſecution, x. 32, 33. xii. 3, &c.

miſe

mise of support, direction, and final success, in the great cause they had undertaken to defend. *Settle it therefore in your hearts* (that is, have perfect faith, or confidence, in my assurances of assistance), *not to meditate before what ye shall answer. For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist*[p]. How literally this promise has been fulfilled it is surely unnecessary to observe.

The Gospel must first be published to all Nations.

It should be remembered, that our Lord delivered this Prophecy only two days before he was given up to the Jewish council, forsaken by all his followers, and crucified like a common malefactor. The promise of success is here repeated to his Disciples, to guard them against the suggestions of doubt from the increasing appearances of improbability—the importance and extent of the Gospel are pointed out—and the time of its establishment in the Gentile world exactly defined. Our Lord declared in the most plain and express words, that the Gospel must be published

[p] Luke xxi. 14, 15.

among

among all nations at a particular period. This preaching of the new Revelation to the various nations was *not*, therefore, "a sudden project of the Apostles, undertaken because the Jews rejected the Gospel;" but it was a part of the original plan, long before declared by the Prophets, and thus communicated by Christ to his Disciples, who were not at that time sufficiently enlightened as to the great scheme of universal salvation.

The first preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles was attended with many miraculous circumstances; and we find St. Peter asserting with a mixture of surprise and conviction, that "upon the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost, as upon themselves at the beginning;" alluding probably to the day of Pentecost. The Epistles, written to Christians in various countries, are a standing evidence of the swift propagation of the Gospel, as they were addressed to converts made at different times before, and at that time residing in Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Thessalonica, Pontus, Asia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, and other places. St. Paul informs his Roman converts, "that the Gentiles were made obedient through mighty signs and wonders by the power of the spirit

of God; so that from Jerusalem and round about Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ." And to the Colossians he observes, "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven." Wide as the "tidings of peace and good will towards men" had even then been spread, the Apostle could not here mean that every creature under heaven had heard the Gospel. The sense of the passage evidently is, the Gospel is not, like the Mosaic Law, given to any one peculiar people, but is *addressed to* every creature under heaven—the whole world may enjoy the blessings of the Christian dispensation, and of this most joyful truth the numerous Gentile converts already made by the *visible* power of the Spirit of God, are an incontestable proof. It is well known from various records, that the Gospel was preached to Jews and Gentiles, in Greece, Arabia, Ethiopia, Syria, Asia Minor, Judea, Italy, Macedonia, and many other places, with great success, within the time predicted by our Lord. Bishop Newton says, "It appears, from the writers of the history of the church, that before the destruction of Jerusalem, the

Gospel was not only preached in the lesser Asia, and Greece, and Italy, the great theatres of action then in the world; but was likewise propagated as far northward as Scythia, as far southward as Ethiopia, as far eastward as Parthia and India, as far westward as Spain and Britain." Tacitus confirms this statement [q], by relating a very strong and apposite fact. He mentions that "the Christian religion, which arose in Judea, spread over many parts of the world, and extended to Rome itself, where the professors of it, as early as the time of Nero, amounted to a vast multitude." These were the events predicted to happen *before* the destruction of Jerusalem, and we see they actually did take place within the time prescribed. The burning of Rome, which gave occasion to Tacitus to mention the Christians, happened in the tenth year of the reign of Nero, in the sixty-fourth year of the Christian era, and Jerusalem was not destroyed before the year of our Lord seventy.

If the swift propagation of the Gospel without the assistance of the established powers

[q] Annal. lib. xv.

of the world, without the countenance of the monarch, the approbation of the philosopher, or the prejudices of the vulgar, but in direct opposition to them all, be evidence in favour of the Divine origin of Christianity, the argument which it furnishes is certainly more complete and more striking, as such a propagation was the subject of Prophecy; and as that Prophecy was pronounced under the most unfavourable circumstances that can well be imagined.

But to return to the awful and instructive narration—We come now to consider Jerusalem as in a state of actual siege.

But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, stand in the holy place; or, when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

The devoted place which was the immediate object of these formidable denunciations is thus clearly pointed out, and the armies men-

tioned could be no other than those of the Romans. The images of the Emperor and the eagles that were carried in the front of the legions, were regarded with religious abhorrence by the Jews, as they were ranked among the Pagan deities, and reverenced with divine honours. During the time that Pilate was governor of Judea, the Jews were much offended at him for setting up the standards of the legions, and made earnest supplications to have them removed. A similar request was made to Vitellius, Proconsul of Syria, who had determined to march his army through Judea. Both these petitions were complied with, when the Roman generals understood that it was contrary to the Jewish laws to suffer images, which were the objects of idolatrous worship, to be brought into their country. They were, therefore, called with the greatest and most striking propriety of language, the *abomination of desolation*; since the erection of them within the limits of the holy place, as Jerusalem is emphatically called, marked the fatal design of the enemy to lay waste the country, and expose it to all the ravages of war. The English translation, "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies," does not preserve the exact sense of the original Greek, which

may more literally be rendered, "And when ye shall see Jerusalem encircled with *camps*." The words thus translated correspond exactly with the fact. Josephus says[1], that "the seditious parties in the city saw with astonishment the Romans measuring out the ground for their camps in three places."

For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round about, and keep thee in on every side.

The Roman army completely encompassed the city[2], and enclosed the Jews on every side; and although it was at first considered as an impracticable project to surround the whole city with a wall, yet Titus animated his army to make the attempt. In three days they built a wall of thirty-nine furlongs in length, with thirteen towers erected at proper distances, in which, as in garrisons, the Roman soldiers were placed.

Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that

[1] De Bell. Jud. lib. v. c. 2.
[2] Bell. Jud. l. v. c. 12.

are

are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

We have seen that our Lord prepared his Disciples to expect persecution as the trial of their faith, *before* the "abomination of desolation" was set up in Jerusalem. But to mark the more strongly the wrath of God against the *Jews*, and that "*these* were the days of vengeance" predicted by Moses and the Prophets, in case of their rejection of the Messiah, the *Christians, who endured to the end*, were to be saved from the calamities denounced against Jerusalem. On this occasion the discriminating hand of Providence was to be unusually apparent. *Then shall two be in the field, the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken, the other left*[t]. And the especial care of Christ over his infant church is most forcibly exemplified by the assurance, that *for the elect's sake* these days of unprecedented affliction *should be shortened.* Our Lord therefore gives his Disciples particular directions relative to the means by which they were to save them-

[t] Matt. xxiv. 41.

selves from the approaching danger: and their implicit obedience and consequent safety are recorded by many writers of that age; by whom it is asserted, that "none of the Christians perished in the destruction of Jerusalem." Cestius Gallus, who first assaulted Jerusalem, might with ease have taken it, the Jews not being prepared for a siege, and have put an end to the war; but, without any apparent reason, he suddenly raised the siege. Josephus[u] observes, "this afforded a happy opportunity to many of the eminent Jews to escape from the city, as from a ship that was sinking." Under the name of Jews thus mentioned by the historian, were included those converts to Christianity who were afterwards known to have survived the destruction of Jerusalem. Warned by the prediction of their Lord, and encouraged by his promise of safety, *that not a hair of their head should perish*, they fled to the mountains of Perea[x], and other places governed by Agrippa, who was an ally of the Romans, and disposed to be a friend to the cause of Christianity. There they found a secure retreat from the storm that was bursting upon their devoted country:

[u] Bell. Jud. lib. ii. c. 20.

[x] Eusebii Hist. Evang. lib. iii. c. 5.

and

and when Titus was leading on his army to Jerusalem, a great number of the inhabitants of Jericho retired from that city also to the mountains. But the difficulty of subsisting in the mountains, and the dangers to which the Christian Jews were continually exposed from the hatred of their countrymen, and the fury of the Romans, required that *the days should be shortened* for their preservation. Accordingly, we find Titus, contrary to the advice of his officers, resolved to take the city by storm, rather than by blockade—the infatuated Jews weakening their force by divisions and mutual slaughters—burning their provisions, which might have lasted many years—and quitting their strongest holds, which Titus himself considered as impregnable[y].

But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days; for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.

[y] "We have fought," said Titus to his friends, while viewing the fortifications of the city after it was taken, "with God on our side, and it is God who hath pulled the Jews out of their strong holds; for what could the hands of men or machines effect against these towers?" De Bell. Jud, lib. ix. c. 9.

Again

enemies, who ascribe these extraordinary sufferings to the character of this extraordinary people, as some extenuation of their own oppression and cruelty. Our Lord's emphatic words therefore need not be considered as hyperbolical, but as intended to mark that peculiar accumulation of woe, which the peculiar aggravation of the sins of this people would draw down upon Jerusalem.

There shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect[b].

These words clearly relate not only to the prognostics, but to circumstances which happened during the siege. "The tyrannical zealots who ruled the city," says Josephus[c], "suborned many false Prophets to declare, that aid would be given to the people from

[b] Josephus makes use of the exact words, signs and wonders, σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα, when speaking of the false Prophets foretold by our Saviour. "If they shall say he is in the desert, go not forth." Josephus says, they drew many people after them into the desert. Tillotson, vol. xiii. p. 118.

[c] Bell. Jud. lib. vi. c. 5.

heaven.

heaven. This was done to prevent them from attempting to desert, and to inspire them with confidence. In this manner impostors, abusing the sacred name of God, deluded the unhappy multitude; who, like infatuated men who have neither eyes to see, nor reason to judge, regarded neither the infallible denunciations pronounced by the antient Prophets, nor the clear prodigies that indicated the approaching desolation." But to guard the Christians against the expectation of his *personal* appearance at that time, our Lord expressly declares, that, "as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, *so* shall the coming of the Son of man be." So sudden and so universal was to be the display of his *power* at this momentous period, when "the sceptre was to be removed from Judah," and the whole world called to "worship at the throne of God and of his Christ."

As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down.

We must recollect that our Lord thus decisively pronounced the destruction of the Temple,

Temple, in a time of profound tranquillity, when this spacious, strong, and magnificent edifice was held in universal honour, and supported not more by the enthusiastic attachment of the Jews, than the general veneration of the Gentiles [d]. Titus, the Roman General, declared, at a council of war, his resolution to preserve the Temple, and in his speech to the Jews he expressed the same determination. But the Almighty had decreed its fall [e]. —And now, says Josephus [f], the fatal day approached in the revolution of ages, the tenth day of August, emphatically called the "day of vengeance," in which the first Temple had been destroyed by the King of

[d] The Temple was four furlongs in circuit, or a square of one furlong on each side. In its front were large and lofty galleries, supported by rows of massy pillars. It was a hundred cubits in height. The pillars were one hundred and sixty-two in number, each twenty-seven feet high, and in thickness as much as three men could embrace. The *stones* made use of for this building were twenty-five cubits long, eight in height, and twelve in width. Their great dimensions and solidity make the completion of the Prophecy the more extraordinary. Calmet, vol. iii. p. 16.

[e] Two summers were employed by the Romans in reducing the remoter cities of Judea. Hostilities were suspended during the third year, by commotions at Rome. Jerusalem was taken after a close siege of five months.

[f] Bell. Jud. lib. vi. c. 4.

Babylon. A Roman ſoldier, without receiving any orders—nay, as it appears, contrary to orders [g], threw a flaming brand into one of the windows of the Temple, which ſet the buildings on fire. With violent outcries the Jews ruſhed in to extinguiſh the flames; and ſpared no effort, not even the riſk of life itſelf, to ſave that ſacred edifice on which they vainly reſted their ſecurity. Titus, informed of what had happened, haſtened to the ſpot, with his officers and his attendant legions. But in vain he waved his hand, in vain he raiſed his voice, commanding his ſoldiers to extinguiſh the fire; ſo great was the clamour and tumult, that no attention was paid even to him. Rage and rancour againſt the Jews hurried on the exaſperated Romans with irreſiſtible fury—many were thrown down in the avenues of the Temple—many fell among the burning and ſmoking ruins of the gates and galleries, and were trodden upon by thoſe who followed them, eager for plunder and for ſlaughter—numbers of the dead and dying Jews were heaped about the altar, which now afforded

g Joſephus ſays, he declared himſelf actuated by a Divine impulſe.

no

no protection, and streams of human blood poured through the outer court. A mixed multitude of nearly 6000 persons, who had fled at the command of an impostor to a gallery yet standing without the Temple, perished at once by the relentless barbarity of the soldiery, who set it on fire, and suffered none to escape.

When Titus saw it impossible to enforce the obedience of his troops, he proceeded to the inner Temple. Struck with the grandeur of the architecture, and the magnificence of the decorations, which surpassed even its fame; and observing that the fire had not yet caught the sanctuary, he renewed with redoubled energy his attempts to stop the flames.—But neither menaces nor intreaties could avail. While he was intent upon the means of its preservation, fire was actually applied to the door-posts of the holy place by one of his soldiers, and the conflagration soon became general.—Titus was obliged to retire, and no one remained to check the horrid carnage which ensued.—Neither the old or the young—neither the priests or common people—neither women or children were spared from the

the avenging ſword; and thoſe who ſurrendered ſhared the ſame fate with thoſe who reſiſted. The crackling noiſe of the devouring flame, which now completely enveloped the Temple, vaſt as was its ſize, mingled with the ſhrieks of deſpair, the groans of the dying, and the claſh of arms; and from the extent of the buildings, the lofty hill on which it ſtood appeared to a diſtant ſpectator, as itſelf burning from its foundations in one terrific blaze.

Thus according to the "ſure word of Prophecy," was this Temple completely deſtroyed, though it was equally the wiſh and the endeavour of the conqueror, and the conquered, to preſerve it. The extreme rigour of the Roman diſcipline, and the prompt obedience of the legions to the voice of their commander, were in this inſtance violated; and an enthuſiaſtic rage, and an ungovernable fury hurried them to the work of deſtruction: and thus, human agents became the inſtruments of Divine vengeance in oppoſition to their own determinations.

Titus, ſtill anxious to ſave the city, not yet involved in the conflagration, again offered the wretched inhabitants their lives, upon

condition they laid down their arms.—The flames were rapidly advancing—the houses were crowded with dead, and dying victims of pestilence, famine, and *murder*—upwards of 2000 persons having laid violent hands on themselves, or killed one another by consent, besides the number killed under pretence of sedition, or intended desertion, by the party which governed the city—yet did the desperate madness of their leaders oblige them to reject these terms of mercy.—Incensed by the insolence of a people whom he considered as already conquered, the Roman General gave permission to his soldiers to fall upon them with fire and sword, and to make the best of the spoil. Now was the tremendous cup of wrath poured forth in all its bitterness.—Imagination shrinks from the detail of such unprecedented horrors, as Josephus asserts to have continued many days—he alone who saw the dreadful realities could paint them with the force of truth; and to his description I refer those readers who require more evidence of the unexampled miseries attending this memorable catastrophe; adding only his concluding remarks[h]. "There never was a city that suffered such miseries, or a

[h] Bell. Jud. lib. v. c. 10.

race of men from the beginning of the world, who so abounded in wickedness. I am of opinion, that if the Romans had delayed to destroy these impious wretches, the city would have been swallowed up by an earthquake, overwhelmed by the waters, or consumed by fire from heaven, like another Sodom; for it produced a race of men far worse than those who suffered such punishment."

Thy enemies will lay thee even with the ground, and they will not leave in thee one stone upon another.

When the soldiers had rested from their horrid work of blood and plunder, Titus gave orders to demolish the foundations of the City and the Temple.—But, that posterity might judge of the glory and value of his conquest, he left three towers standing as monuments of the prodigious strength and greatness of the city; and also a part of the western wall, which he designed as a rampart for a garrison, to keep the surrounding country in subjection. All the other buildings were completely levelled with the ground[1]. When Titus

[1] It is recorded by Maimonides, and likewise in the Jewish Talmud, that Terentius Rufus, an officer in the army of

Titus came again to Jerusalem in his way from Syria to Egypt, and beheld the sad devastation, he bitterly lamented the cruel necessity which had compelled him to destroy so magnificent a city. And Eleazar, in his address to his countrymen the Jews, pathetically asks, "What is become of our city, which was believed to be inhabited by God? It is rooted up from the very foundations; and the only monument of it that is left, is the camp of those who destroyed it still pitched upon its remains."

And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all nations.

The number that perished during the siege amounted to eleven hundred thousand; and the number of captives to ninety-seven thousand.—These were not all inhabitants of the city; for the Jews, according to their Law, had assembled from all parts to celebrate the feast of unleavened bread; and, in conse-

of Titus, with a ploughshare tore up the foundations of the Temple, and thus remarkably fulfilled the words of the Prophet Micah; "Therefore shall Zion, for your sake, be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest." Mic. iii. 12.

quence

quence of the rapid advance of the Roman army, were suddenly prevented from returning home; *as a snare shall it come upon them.* This circumstance will account for the great multitudes that were shut up in the city during the siege; and to the vast crouds of people thus unusually pent up, does Josephus impute the plague, and, in part, the famine [k]. Of the prisoners Titus reserved the most handsome youths, and principal persons, to adorn his triumphal procession on his return to Rome; and presented many to the governors of the provinces, to be exposed during the public games to wild beasts, or to the sword. He [l] sent those who were more than 17 years of age to labour in the public works in Egypt; and those who were under that age were sold for slaves, and sent into different parts of the empire. But eleven thousand of these miserable captives were absolutely starved

[k] Cestius, in order to convince Nero that he ought not to despise the Jewish nation, desired the priests to number the people who were assembled to celebrate the passover when he was at Jerusalem: and there were found to be three millions of Jews, including women and children. The astonishing number of the Jewish people was the subject of Prophecy. See Chap. II. But to confirm this account as merely an historical fact, we need only look at the *present* state of population in Cairo, and Pekin.

[l] De Bell. Jud. lib. vi. c. 9.

to death, by the carelessness or cruelty of their guard. During this war with the Romans, one million three hundred and fifty-seven thousand, six hundred and sixty, are particularly enumerated as slain in different places, which are mentioned; and numbers of every age, sex, and condition, are mentioned, as having perished at different times, and in different ways, besides these which are particularly enumerated.

"In the reign of Adrian 985 of the best towns in Judea were sacked and demolished, 580,000 men fell by the sword in battle, besides an infinite multitude who perished by famine, and sickness, and fire; so that Judea was almost depopulated, and an almost incredible number of every age, and sex, were sold like horses, and dispersed over the face of the earth[m]."

Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled.

When Adrian visited the eastern parts of the Roman empire, and found Jerusalem a heap

[m] Bishop Newton, vol. ii. Diss. 18.

of

of ruins, forty-seven years after its destruction, he determined to rebuild it; but not exactly on the same spot. He called the new city, Ælia, after his own name, placed a Roman colony in it, and dedicated a Temple to Jupiter Capitolinus, in the room of the Temple of Jehovah. This profanation of the Holy Place was the great cause of the rebellions and sufferings of the Jews during the reign of Adrian. The city was once more taken by them and burnt.—Adrian rebuilt it—re-established the colony—ordered the statue of a hog (which the Jews held in religious abhorrence) to be set up over the gate that opened towards Bethlehem; and published an edict, strictly forbidding any Jew, on pain of death, to enter the city, or even to look at it from a distance. Thus the city remained till the time of Constantine, the first Christian emperor, who greatly improved it, and restored the name of Jerusalem; but the Jews were not permitted to reside there. Attempting in vain to get possession of their capital, Constantine caused their ears to be cut off, their bodies to be marked as rebels, and dispersed them over all the provinces of the empire, as fugitives and slaves. The Emperor Julian, from enmity to the Christians, favoured the Jews; and, in the vain hope of

contradicting the Prophecy concerning it, attempted to rebuild the Temple, but was miraculously prevented, and obliged to desist from the undertaking [n]. Jovian revived the severe edict

[n] This attempt of Julian was made A. D. 363, and is recorded by Ammianus Marcellinus, a contemporary Pagan Historian, lib. xxiii. c. 1. It is likewise mentioned by several Christian writers of the same century. For full proofs of the miracle by which this attempt was defeated, see Warburton's Julian.—A similar project was formed by the conspirators against Christianity in France, and the project *failed*. See Barruel's Memoirs of Jacobinism, vol. i. p. 185.

Extract from Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol. 2, C. 23, P. 388. 4to. 1781.

"Gregory Nazienzen published his account of the miracle before the expiration of the same year 363. He boldly asserted that this preternatural event was not disputed by the infidels, and this assertion, strange as it may seem, is confirmed by the unexceptionable testimony of Ammianus Marcellinus. The philosophic Soldier who loved the virtues without adopting the prejudices of his Master, has recorded in his judicious and candid history of his own times, the extraordinary obstacles which interrupted the restoration of the temple of Jerusalem. Whilst Alypius [the learned and virtuous Alypius—the chosen friend of the Emperor] assisted by the Governors of the Province, urged with vigour and diligence the execution of the work, horrible balls of fire breaking out near the foundations with frequent and reiterated attacks, rendered the place from time to time inaccessible to the scorched and blasted workmen, and the victorious elements continuing in

edict of Adrian; and the Greek Emperors continued the prohibition; so that the wretched Jews used to give money to the soldiers for permission to behold and weep over the ruins of their Temple and City, particularly on the return of that memorable day, in which it had been taken by the Romans. In the reign of Heraclius, Chosroes, King of Persia, took and plundered it; but Heraclius soon recovered possession—In 637, the Christians surrendered Jerusalem to Omar, the Saracen Caliph, who built a mosque upon the site of Solomon's Temple. It remained in the possession of the Saracens above 400 years, and then was taken by the Turks. They retained it till the year 1099, when the Franks took it under Godfrey of Bouloigne, General of the Crusaders. The Franks kept possession 88 years, that is, till 1187, when the Turks, under Saladin, re-

in this manner obstinately and resolutely bent, as it were, to drive them to a distance, the undertaking was abandoned.

"Such an authority should satisfy a believing, and must astonish an incredulous mind. Yet a Philosopher may still require the original evidence of impartial and intelligent Spectators."—The usual objection of these *Philosophers* to all Miracles. 5th edition.

took

took it by capitulation, and with them it has remained ever since[a].

Thus literally has this Prophecy been hitherto fulfilled!—*Jerusalem has been thus constantly trodden down of the Gentiles*—the Romans, the Saracens, the Franks, and the Turks—Its antient inhabitants have been expelled, and persecuted, and its holy places have been polluted. The eagles of idolatrous Rome, the crescent of the impostor Mahomet, and the banner of Popery carried by the Crusaders, have been successively displayed amidst the ruins of the sanctuary of Jehovah, for nearly 1800 years. But the conclusion of this prediction, "*till* the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," indicates that it shall *not* be trodden down for ever.

HITHERTO the language of this Prophecy has been found clear and explicit; and History has abundantly proved the *literal* accomplishment of all its parts in their first sense

[a] Newton, vol. ii. Diss. 20.

and

and reference to the destruction of Jerusalem. We now come to the bold figures and striking images of oriental diction, suited to the designed obscurity of a Prophecy, which, while it foretold the signal events which were at once to prove the divinity and display the power of the Messiah to Jews and Gentiles, on the *first establishment* of his kingdom, revealed in awful terms the *signs* which shall precede the *second* coming of our Lord, at a then distant period, and the manner, the purpose, and the final consequences of His appearance.

The consideration of this Prophecy, as it relates to events yet future, must be referred to another part of this work: my present business is to prove the accurate fulfilment of the Prophecy, as it relates to events which are past.

It has been proved by many learned men, that the language of Prophecy is not of that vague and uncertain signification, which infidelity so eagerly asserts it to be; but that certain symbols were the established signs of certain ideas; and that thus the Prophetic language may be clearly understood by those who are conversant in this species of writing.

For

For instance, great and extraordinary political revolutions, such as the fall of kings and the overthrow of governments, are represented by the antient Prophets, by changes in the course of nature, and disorder among the heavenly bodies—extraordinary commotions among the lowest classes of people, by the raging turbulence, and roaring of the sea. And our Lord in the following prophecy uses the same metaphors with the same meaning.

Immediately after (or, as it may be translated, *amidst*) *the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other*[p]. These are the words of St. Matthew: St. Mark[q] uses nearly the same expressions; but as St.

[p] Matt. xxiv. 29, &c. [q] Mark xiii. 24, &c.

Luke

Luke varies a little from both, I shall insert his relation also.

And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh[r].

Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled[s]. *Heaven and earth shall*

[r] Luke xxi. 25, &c.

[s] It has been objected, that the words "till *all* be fulfilled," must refer in their primary sense at least, to *all* the events predicted; and Christianity was not *visibly* established in peace, security, and power, till Paganism fell from

shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour [when the heavens and earth shall pass away] *knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For*

from the throne of the Roman world, in A. D. 312. The context will, I think, remove this difficulty. By the parable of the fig-tree our Lord assures his Disciples, that the signs *immediately* preceding the destruction of Jerusalem should be *so plain*, that the most common attention to passing events would enable them to see and to avoid the impending evils, which he had *as plainly* foretold; and immediately adds, "Verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away till *all these things* be fulfilled." These words therefore seem obviously restricted, in their primary sense, to the *numerous circumstances* which he had most accurately described as *signs* of that event in which his Disciples felt themselves peculiarly, nay, personally, interested. Especially, as after the solemn affirmation of the truth of a prediction, which at that time must appear so very improbable, and the declaration, that the time appointed for that *distant* "day and hour, when the heavens and the earth shall pass away, was known to the Father only," our Lord *returns* to the *signs* of his coming to manifest the power of his kingdom, and gives the command to *watch*. "But in their *secondary sense* these words may mean this people *(the Jewish nation)* shall not pass away till all be fulfilled;" however dispersed, they shall continue a distinct people from the rest of the world, till *the whole* of this Prophecy shall be accomplished by the second coming of the Son of Man in glory.

as

as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come—Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh[t].

And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig-tree, and all the trees; when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves, that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away. And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

[t] Matt. xxiv. 38, &c.

For

For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man[u].

Without entering into a discussion of the several metaphors in this Prophecy explained by various commentators as referring, in their first and most immediate application, to the several parts of the Jewish government, and to distinct *occurrences* which happened soon after the destruction of Jerusalem, it is sufficient to remark, that the complete subversion of the Jewish polity, ecclesiastical and civil—the complete overthrow of Pagan tyranny and superstition—the establishment of the Christian church in the seat of the empire of the world, and its consequent accession of numbers, power, and splendour, appear to be decisively predicted.—It appears also evident, that the great events which were to increase the prevalence of the Christian religion, and fix its open sovereignty in the world, were to happen *suddenly*, and *unexpectedly* to all who were not prepared by the solemn warning

[u] Luke xxi. 29, &c.

which

which our Lord gave to his Disciples, with a command to *watch*. Let us now turn to the page of history for the accomplishment of these predictions: which, as this Prophecy only points to the great events circumstantially revealed by our Lord to his beloved Disciple St. John *after* the destruction of Jerusalem, shall be stated very concisely.

Our Lord expressly declares, that *all these things*, that is, the solemn train of predictions concerning Jerusalem, *should be fulfilled before the then present generation should pass away*. This Prophecy was delivered in the year of our Lord 33, and Jerusalem was destroyed 37 years afterwards; so that many of the contemporaries of Christ who heard the Prophecy might witness its accomplishment.

The total subversion of the Jewish government, religious and civil, can scarcely be more strikingly represented than by the Decree issued by Vespasian, *immediately* after Jerusalem was destroyed, ordering "all the lands of the Jews to be sold for his own use;" and "all the Jews, wheresoever they dwelt, to pay each man every year the same

sum to the Capitol of Rome, that they had before paid to the Temple at Jerusalem." Thus the land of the whole nation became the *private property* of the Roman Emperor, and the whole people became aliens, and fugitives, and slaves. "The sacrifice and the oblation ceased," and the Jews have ever since remained without a City, without a Temple, without a King, and without a Priest [x]; their tribes confounded, their pedigrees lost [y], and yet, a people separated and distinguished, in person, manners, and religion, from all the nations among whom they are scattered.

We have already seen the Gospel preached to the Gentiles—the church of Christ established—increasing—and at the same time suffering continual persecution from Jews and Heathens, according to the express declarations of our Saviour to his Disciples;—we have seen the total abolition of the Jewish

[x] Those who are now called Priests among the Jews, are only *chief Rabbis*, and have little or no authority, or resemblance to the office of *High-Priest*, established by the Law of Moses.

[y] Their pedigrees had been carefully preserved till the coming of Christ, which may be considered as another proof that he was indeed their expected Messiah.

Theocracy—

Theocracy—" the men of the vineyard *have been* punished by their Lord, for having slain his son." It only remains for us to direct our attention to the triumph of the persecuted church over Pagan tyranny and superstition.

But here I must beg leave to observe, that complete as this victory was over the *reigning enemy* of the church, and greatly as it extended the apparent dominion of Christ over the nations—Paganism falling before Christianity throughout the Roman Empire—yet does not this great event appear fully adequate to the sublime description which our Lord gives of the triumph, the glory, and the happiness of the church in this most solemn Prophecy.—We might therefore have looked to a future period for its ultimate completion, even if there had not been a Revelation concerning the succeeding corruptions, trials, and persecutions, to which the church was to be subjected previous to the final victory over all its enemies, of which this was but a type.

The period of history from the destruction of Jerusalem to the accession of Constan-

tine, excepting only the short reigns of the Septimian family, abounds in a most remarkable degree with the *general* ravages of war, famine, and pestilence. The amazing slaughter of the Jews in the time of Trajan and Adrian, has been already mentioned. The Romans also suffered so severely, that the Emperor Adrian forbore the usual salutation in his Letters to the Senate, in token of general grief and distress[z]. The reign of Maximin was filled with wars, murders, invasions, and rebellions; and in the following fifty years there were more than twenty Emperors, almost all of whom died in war, or were murdered by their own soldiers and subjects. In the reign of Gallienus, the thirty tyrants, or usurpers, who arose in different parts of the empire, occasioned most violent commotions—The dreadful incursions of the Goths and Scythians—the most destructive pestilence that ever had visited mankind, pervading all the Roman provinces and continuing fifteen years in the reign of Gallus—the horrible persecution of the Christians for ten years under Diocleſian, and the civil wars between Maximian, Galerius, Maximin, Max-

[z] Newton, vol. iii. p. 61, &c.

entius,

entius, Licinius, and other competitors for empire, exhibit together a moſt awful picture of the convulſive efforts of "the powers of darkneſs againſt the kingdom of the Prince of Peace." Many indeed were in that age impreſſed by the extraordinary manifeſtations of the wrath of God. *They mourned, and their hearts failed them for fear, when they ſaw the Son of man coming in the power of his kingdom.* Galerius[a], Maximin, and Licinius, recalled their Decrees and Edicts againſt the Chriſtians, publicly confeſſed the guilt of their cruel perſecutions, and acknowledged the juſt judgments of God and of Chriſt in their deſtruction.

"A change of all the powers in being was the moſt characteriſtic mark of the age from 260 to 312. For, from the time of the ſetting up of the thirty tyrants, to the time of Conſtantine [excepting only the ſhort reign of Aurelian, and he carried war into the Eaſt] the empire was continually *ſhaken* and torn, and gradually diſmembered by civil wars; and there was no bright ſun, or moon in it, no one great ruling potentate, as in the ages preceding; but it became a prey, and was plun-

[a] Newton, vol. iii. p. 79.

dered in every part by the Goths and Scythians, and other barbarous nations. The whole period was remarkable only for the expiring pangs and struggles of Pagan tyranny. And at the same time, as if it were on purpose to turn the attention of mankind, to apply this precise part of this Prophecy to these very days; in the beginning of them, in the year 262, most parts of the Empire were visited with a most grievous pestilence and famine, attended with dreadful earthquakes, surprising darkness, and strange lightnings, by all of which many perished; there was an accumulation also of other dire calamities and *shakings*, amongst which, the sea overflowed and drowned whole countries. In the conclusion, the Pagan empire ceased, and those who had supported its dominion lost all power and authority, and were *cast down*, and the whole form of government was changed[b]." "The great lights of the Heathen world, the *sun, moon, and stars*, were all eclipsed and obscured; the Heathen Emperors and Cæsars were slain, the Heathen priests and augurs were extirpated, the Heathen officers and magistrates were removed, the Heathen temples were demolished, and

[b] Mr. King's Morsels of Criticism.

their

their revenues appropriated to better uses [c]." The writers of that age celebrate the peace of the church under the protection of the civil powers, and the great accession of converts, both Jews and Gentiles, in very triumphant terms. "Tranquillity being restored throughout the world," says Lactantius, "the church, which was lately ruined, riseth again. Now after the violent agitations of so great a tempest, a calm air and the desired light became resplendent. Now God hath relieved the afflicted; now he hath wiped away the tears of the sorrowful [d]." Some medals of Constantine are still preserved, with the head of the Emperor on one side, and this inscription, *Constantinus Aug.* and on the reverse, *Beata Tranquillitas, Blessed Tranquillity*, which continuing uninterrupted till the death of Constantine in 337, the Church enjoyed the promised peace and security and happiness."—"*The angels*, or messengers," *gathered the elect into it from the north and from the south, from the east and from the west*; and the power and the glory of the Son of

[c] Newton, vol. iii. p. 72.

[d] Newton, vol. iii. p. 78.

man were visibly established among the nations of the earth *.

And now the Believer may boldly ask, whether it be possible for an unprejudiced mind to consider this Prophecy with attention, and doubt concerning the reality of Divine inspiration, or the immediate agency of Divine providence? The whole of this Prophetical narrative, when all its parts are viewed together, displays a regular series of events, rising gradually to the final catastrophe. First are announced wars, and rumours of wars: next, a period of turbulence, of insurrection, and of hostility of one nation against another, attended with plagues, pestilence, and earthquakes. Then follow circumstances immediately relating to the

* It is worthy of remark, that from the time of Constantine to the present age, the church has never been molested by the *avowed enemies of Jesus Christ*. The various Heretics, Mahometans, and Papists, by whom it has been alternately scandalized, and tormented, have all confessed the name of Jesus Christ to be worthy of more or less respect and honour; and his Gospel to be more or less divine, according to their different systems. The inspiration of the Scriptures, and the perfection of the Christian morality, were allowed to be incontrovertible by them all—Let modern infidels consider this!

Disciples,

Disciples, and the Religion of Christ—the prospect of persecution—the promise of deliverance from the impending evils, and the assurance of the general publication of the Gospel.——The approach of the Roman armies to Jerusalem—the erection of their idolatrous standards in the Holy Land—the hardships and calamities of the siege—the destruction of the city and the dispersion of the people, are minutely described.—And lastly are foretold, in all the sublimity of metaphoric language, the total abolition of the Jewish government—the complete subversion of Pagan tyranny and superstition, and the triumph of the Christian church.

History, the truth of which has never yet been questioned, records the accurate fulfilment of all these various circumstances and events, in the order in which they were predicted; and the constant testimony of the Jews for more than 1700 years, affords irrefragable evidence to the certainty of the facts related.

And if the Divine authority of this wonderful Prophecy be thus incontestably established, how can it be even plausibly denied, that JESUS was indeed that "PROPHET and

LAW-

LAWGIVER) of whom Moses had predicted, that "Whoso hearkened not unto him, the Lord would require it of him"—the "MESSIAH" "IN WHOM ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH WERE TO BE BLESSED."

The historical account which has been given of the accomplishment of the foregoing Prophecies, leads us directly to observe, that at the length of time between the Prophecies and their accomplishment, together with the particularity and minuteness of the circumstances, and the diversity of the agents employed in the execution, render it equally impossible that they should have been foretold by chance, or accomplished by human contrivance; the conclusion, viz. that they were inspired by God, is undeniable.

Having thus established the *truth* of Prophecy upon indisputable ground, I consider the original question, "WHETHER GOD HAS EVER REVEALED FUTURE EVENTS TO MANKIND," as answered to the Reader's satisfaction; AND THE SUPERINTENDING PROVIDENCE

DENCE OF GOD OVER THE WORLD, AS COMPLETELY PROVED. I beseech him then to examine farther, whether *all* the Prophecies, from the time of our first parent Adam, to the time of St. John, do not evidently point to ONE GREAT SCHEME, to which every other plan of Providence appears subordinate, and ultimately refers—Let him consider the *frequent* intimations of God's will, and *frequent conditional* predictions of punishments or blessings, as *a series of proof* of his superintending care of a people who were to prepare the way for the Messiah—to preserve the knowledge of the promises of God in the world, and to remain as monuments of the truth of Prophecy, when Prophecy itself should cease. —Let him consider the frequent allusions, and direct predictions, relative to the Saviour of the world, beginning with our first parents, and reaching with increasing clearness to the time of the *harbinger* of "the day-spring from on high," which arose to illumine the whole earth.—Let him consider that Jesus, by exactly fulfilling the predictions concerning the Messiah, not only reconciled man to his Creator, but the volume of the Law and the Prophets to the Gospel, and fully explained that great mystery of redemption and righteousness, to the completion of which,

which, the Typical, the Ceremonial, and the Prophetical dispensations throughout the whole course of the Jewish history, and for no less a period than 4000 years, was made subservient. And if it shall appear, as it surely must appear, that the *great* design of Prophecy, was THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION UPON THE BASIS OF DIVINE REVELATION, let him consider that the question, whether he shall receive or reject Christianity, becomes in the highest degree important; *because*, if it be proved that these Prophecies contain the revealed will of God, it necessarily follows that MAN IS BOUND TO BELIEVE AND OBEY THE RELIGION OF CHRIST.

In order to display this great design of Prophecy in the most clear and striking point of view that I can imagine possible, I shall subjoin, "The Life of Jesus Christ, as drawn from the Antient Prophets," by Mr. Gilpin [f], and then proceed to point out in the second Part of this Work, additional evidence in support of what has been asserted respecting the *extent* as well as *unity* of design in the

[f] Gilpin's Exposition of the New Testament, vol. i. p. 45—60.

great

great ſcheme of revelation, from the Prophecies which refer to the ages of the world *ſubſequent* to the eſtabliſhment of the Chriſtian religion.

THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST AS DRAWN FROM THE ANTIENT PROPHETS.

"I have divided the whole collection into four ſections.—The firſt exhibits a ſeries of thoſe Prophecies, which contain the *earlieſt*, and moſt *remote* intimations of the Meſſiah. They are dark, it is true: but as they plainly appear to *center in one point*, they illuſtrate each other. Each Prophecy, *conſidered apart*, might be called obſcure; but the whole ſeries *in combination* emits certainly a very ſtrong light. They begin with predicting a *victory*; and an *everlaſting covenant*, which was to take place *between God and all the nations of the earth*. Under the ideas of a *tree*, and a *mountain*, they hold out the *grandeur*, and *dignity* of the Meſſiah's kingdom; and in a variety of beautiful images, in which all nature is repreſented in harmony, and the wild beaſts

beasts of the forest tamed, they exhibit that peace, and happiness, and universal change in the manners of men, which this glorious predicted reign was meant to introduce; disclosing, at the same time, throughout, its *spiritual nature*, and *the transcendent joy*, with which it ought to be received.

"In the second section are exhibited those Prophecies, which relate to the *birth* of the Messiah. Here the prophetic language becomes more distinct, and full. Those *general* intimations, which were given before, begin now to *break*, and *particularize*. The same lineaments appear; but the features are more distinctly marked. The section opens with predicting the *forerunner of the Messiah*, in the person of John the Baptist. The Prophecies of the Messiah's *birth* succeed; and the wonderful peculiarity of his being *born of a virgin*. The *place* of his nativity is specified; and the *characteristics* of his office, and the *nature* of his government, are strongly marked.

"In the third section I have collected such Prophecies, as appertain to the Messiah's *life*. The whole plan of it indeed is specified with

as much precision as the figurative language, in which these predictions are clothed, is able to convey. He is represented as arrayed in the dignity of a *Prophet*, like Moses; and of a *Priest*, like Melchizedec. At the same time, his *mean*, and *suffering state* on earth is strongly characterized. His *gentleness*, and *holiness*; the great efficacy of his *preaching*; the *offence* he gave to worldly men; his repressing the *spirit of worldly wisdom*; his *triumphant entry* into Jerusalem; and his *divine presence* in the Temple; are all distinctly held out. The *variety*, and even the *kind*, of his *miracles* are specified; and his *pastoral care* is strongly represented by images highly expressive of tenderness and affection.

" In the last section I have collected such Prophecies, as appertain to the *death* of Christ. Here the Prophetic spirit, as if imagery failed in describing the last scenes of this awful life, descends from its lofty flights, and marks the several circumstances of that solemn period in the plainest terms; but marks them also with almost historical precision. From his being *betrayed* by one of his Disciples, to his *resurrection*, there is scarce a single circumstance, which one or other of

the

the Prophetic writers hath not mentioned. The bargain made for *thirty pieces* of silver—the *dispersion of the disciples* on the seizing of Jesus—the particulars of his *trial*—the *false witnesses*, that appeared against him—the usage of the *soldiers*—the *mode* of his death—the *behaviour of his enemies* during that awful period—the *time* of that great event—the *end*, and *intention* of it—the *manner* of his *burial*—and his *triumphant resurrection*—all appear to be so exactly conformable to the history of the New Testament, that we might almost think them plain transcripts from it, if we had not the very best historical evidence, that they were all written, published, and well known, many hundred years—the latest of them above four hundred—before the birth of Christ."

SECTION I.

Containing the earliest intimations of the Messiah.

I will put enmity between thee (said God to the serpent) and the woman—between thy seed

seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel[g].—I will establish my covenant (said God to Abraham) between thee and me, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an *everlasting covenant*[h].—Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name Isaac; and I will establish my covenant with him for an *everlasting covenant*, and with his seed after him[i]. And in thy seed shall *all the nations* of the earth be blessed[k].—I will perform the oath (said God to Isaac) which I sware unto Abraham thy father; and in thy seed shall *all the nations* of the earth be blessed[l].—In thee, and in thy seed (said God to Jacob), shall *all the families* of the earth be blessed[m].—And it shall come to pass (said God to David) when thy days shall be expired, and thou shalt go to thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will settle him in mine house *for ever*, and his *throne shall be established for evermore*[n].

I the

[g] Gen. iii. 15. [h] Gen. xvii. 7.
[i] Gen. xvii. 19. [k] Gen. xxii. 18.
[l] Gen. xxvi. 3. [m] Gen. xxviii. 14.
[n] 1 Chron. xvii. 11, &c. This seems to have been *immediately* spoken of Solomon; who was considered as a

I the Lord have called thee in righteousness; I will keep thee; and give thee for a *covenant* to the people; for a *light of the Gentiles*. Thus saith the Lord, I will give thee for a *covenant of the people*—to establish the earth—to cause to *inherit* the *desolate* heritages[o]—Thus saith the Lord, If you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, that there should not be days and nights in their seasons; then may also my *covenant* be broken with my servant David, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne[p]—There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall go out of his roots. And the *Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him*; the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel

type of Christ; but the Prophetic characters are evidently carried beyond a prince, from whose *immediate successor* the kingdom was rent.

[o] Isai. xlii. 6. and xlix. 8. If the context be examined, the whole is evidently Prophetic of the Messiah: but I wished here only to retain such passages, as referred to the covenant.

[p] Jer. xxxiii. 20, 21. From this Prophecy also that part only is taken, which belongs to the covenant. It could have no respect *personally* to David, or his *immediate* posterity; for it was spoken five hundred years after David's death.

and

and might, the Spirit of knowledge, and the fear of the Lord, and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord [q]. —Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a *righteous branch*, and a king shall *reign, and prosper*, and shall *execute judgment, and justice in the earth.* In his days *Judah shall be saved*, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, *The Lord our Righteousness* [r].—In those days will I cause the *Branch of Righteousness* to grow up unto David; and he shall *execute judgment, and righteousness in the land* [s].—Thus saith the Lord God, I will take the highest branch of the highest cedar; and I will plant it on a high mountain; and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar; and under it *shall dwell all the fowls of every wing*, in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell [t]. —Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou and thy fellows that sit before thee: Behold I

[q] Isaiah xi. 1, 2.

[r] Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Here again the same successor is promised to David five hundred years after the death of that prince; which promise had been made before to the Patriarchs, and to that prince himself.

[s] Jer. xxxiii. 15. [t] Ezek. xvii. 22, 23.

will bring forth *my servant the Branch*[w].—Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Behold the man whose *name is the Branch;* he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall *build the Temple of the Lord*[x]; and *he shall bear the glory*, and he shall sit, and *rule upon his throne*[y].—In the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be *established in the top* of the mountains, and it shall be *exalted above the hills*; and the *people shall flow unto it*[z].—The Lord *shall reign over them* in mount Zion, from *henceforth even for ever*[a].—And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be *established*, and shall be *exalted above the hills*; and *all nations shall flow unto it*[b].—And the stone, which was cut out of the mountain *without hands*, shall become a great mountain, and *fill the earth*[c].—And he will destroy in

[w] Zech. iii. 8.

[x] Zech. vi. 12.

[y] *The Reader is referred to the subsequent part of this Work for the consideration of the predictions relative to the kingdom of the Messiah, which are not to be looked upon as yet fulfilled, in their complete and ultimate sense.*

[z] Mic. iv. 1. [a] Mic. iv. 7.

[b] Isaiah ii. 2. [c] Dan. ii. 35.

this

this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations[d].—And many shall say, Come, ye, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and *he will teach* us his ways; and we will walk in *his paths*; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he *shall judge among the nations*, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not rise against nation; neither shall they learn war any more[e].—The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed, and their young ones lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice-den. And they shall not hurt nor destroy in

[d] Isaiah xxv. 7. There is something extremely grand in thus representing the Gospel as removing the darkness spread over all nations by the drawing up of a vast curtain, to let in the light.

[e] Isaiah ii. 3, 4.

all my holy mountain: for *the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord*, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an *ensign of the people*. To it shall the *Gentiles seek*, and *his rest* shall be glorious [f].—The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, *until Shiloh come*, and unto him shall the *gathering of the people be* [g]. —There shall come *a Star* out of Jacob, and

[f] Isaiah xi. 6—10.

[g] Gen. xlix. 10. Some have objected that this Prophecy was fulfilled in Moses. But what sceptre had Judah before Moses? The word *Shiloh* signifies *sent*; and was always interpreted by the antient Jews of the Messiah. It is supposed indeed by many interpreters, that Moses himself alluded to this Prophecy, when he expresses his backwardness in going to Pharaoh, *Send I pray thee by the hand of him, whom thou wilt send*—that is, by the *Shiloh*, whom thou hast promised. How very exactly this Prophecy was fulfilled, is very apparent. The dispersion of the Jews, independent of Prophecy, is one of the most singular events in the history of mankind: but when we consider it as the completion of Prophecy—when we consider this people dispersed, and wandering among all the nations upon earth—without temples—without laws, without government—connected with none; but distinct from all—as if preserved to complete future Prophecies—the whole together, I think, forms an argument of sufficient force to weigh against all the cavils of infidelity.

a sceptre

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a sceptre shall arise out of Israel[h].—I will also give thee for a *light to the Gentiles*, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the *ends of the earth*[i].—I saw in the night-visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man came in the clouds of heaven, and came to the Antient of days. And there was given unto him *dominion*, and *glory*, and *a kingdom*, that all *people*, *nations*, *and languages*, should serve him: *His* dominion is an *everlasting dominion*, which shall not pass away, and *his* kingdom, that which *shall not be destroyed*[k].—The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom, which shall *never be destroyed*: but shall stand for ever[l].—Behold I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings[m].—O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain: O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength: lift it up, be not afraid: say unto the cities of Judah, *Behold your God*[n].—Sing, O heavens, and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath

[h] Numb. xxiv. 17.
[i] Isaiah xlix. 6.
[k] Dan. vii. 13.
[l] Dan. ii. 44.
[m] Isaiah xli. 27.
[n] Isaiah xl. 9.

comforted his people, and will have mercy on his afflicted[o].—Unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings[p].

SECTION II.

Containing those Prophecies which relate to the birth of the Messiah.

The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, *Prepare ye the way of the Lord*, make *straight* in the desert a highway for our God. Every *valley* shall be *exalted*, and every *mountain* and *hill* shall be made *low*: and the *crooked* shall be made *straight*, and the *rough* places *plain*. And the *glory of the Lord shall be revealed*, and *all flesh* shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it[q].—Behold I will send you Elijah the Prophet,

[o] Isaiah xlix. 15. [p] Mal. iv. 2.

[q] Isaiah xl. 3, 4, 5. By *mountains*, and *rough ways*, the Prophet indicates the moral difficulties, which the Gospel tended to remove.

before the coming of the *great and dreadful day of the Lord*[r].—I will send my messenger, and he shall *prepare the way before me*: and the *Lord, whom ye seek*, shall suddenly come to his temple—even the *messenger of the covenant*, whom ye delight in: behold *he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts*[s].—I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. I will give thee *the heathen* for thine *inheritance*, and the *utmost parts of the earth* for thy *possession*[t].—The Lord himself shall give you a sign, Behold, a *Virgin shall conceive*, and bear a son, and shall call his name *Immanuel*[u]. —And thou *Bethlehem Ephratah*, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet *out of thee* shall he come forth, who is to be the ruler *in Israel*: whose *goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting*[x].— —The people that walked in *darkness* have seen a *great light*: they that dwell in the land of the *shadow of death*, upon them hath

[r] Mal. iv. 5. [s] Mal. iii. 1.

[t] Psal. ii. 6, &c. This Prophecy *of the heathen, and the utmost parts of the earth as a possession*, is, in other language, the old patriarchal promise, *In thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.*

[u] Isaiah vii. 14. [x] Mic. v. 2.

the

the *light shined*. For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon *his* shoulder: and his name shall be called *Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace*: Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be *no end*[y].

SECTION III.

Containing those Prophecies, which relate to the Life of the Messiah—his Preaching, and his Miracles.

I will raise them up a *Prophet from among their brethren* (said God to Moses) *like unto thee*; and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them *all that I shall command him*[z].—He hath no *form nor comeliness*:

[y] Isaiah ix. 2, 6.

[z] Deut. xviii. 18. That no Prophet ever did arise in Israel, *like unto Moses*, is taken notice of by Samuel, or whoever added the concluding part of the Pentateuch. See Deut. xx. 10. The great leading characters in Moses, is his *delivering Israel*, and *introducing a new law*. These characters agree only in the Messiah. The great difference

ness; and when we shall see him, there is no *beauty* that we should desire him. He is *despised and rejected* of men—*a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief*: and we hid as it were our faces from him. He was *despised*, and we esteemed him not[a].—He shall not *cry*, nor *cause his voice to be heard in the street*. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth *judgment unto truth*[b].—How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth *good tidings*—that *publisheth peace*—that *publisheth salvation*—that saith unto Zion, *Thy God reigneth*[c].—Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for lo! I come, and will dwell in the midst of thee. And *many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people*: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know, that the Lord hath sent me unto thee[d].—Behold my Servant, whom I have

difference was, that his *deliverance* and his *law* were *universal*, and *perpetual*; those of Moses, *local*, and *transitory*.

[a] Isaiah liii. 2, 3.

[b] Isaiah xlii. 2, 3. This Prophecy sets the mildness and quietness of the Messiah, in opposition to the severe and spirited character of the Prophets.

[c] Isaiah lii. 7. [d] Zech. ii. 10, 11.

chosen—

chosen—mine Elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth *judgment to the Gentiles*. He shall not be discouraged, till he have set *judgment in the earth*: and the *isles shall wait for his law*[e].—He shall not judge after the *sight of his eyes*, neither reprove after the *hearing of his ears*; but with *righteousness shall he judge the poor*, and *reprove with equity*[f]: and he shall smite the earth with the *rod of his mouth*, and with the *breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked*[g]. Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins[h].—The *Spirit of the Lord* is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to *preach good tidings* unto the meek, he hath sent me to *bind up the broken-hearted*—to proclaim *liberty to the captives*, and the *opening of the prison* to them that are *bound*—to proclaim the *acceptable year of the Lord*[i].—And *many nations* shall come and say, Come, let us go up to the *mountain of the Lord*, and to the *house of the God of Ja-*

[e] Isaiah xlii. 1. 4.

[f] That is, he shall not take cognizance of actions from his senses; nor according to outward appearance.

[g] That is, the doctrine which he preaches shall make the eternal separation of good and bad.

[h] Isaiah xi. 3, &c. [i] Isaiah lxi. 1.

cob,

cob, and he will teach us *his ways*, and we will walk in *his paths*: for *the Law shall go forth out of Zion*, and the *word of the Lord from Jerusalem* [k].—He shall be a *stone of stumbling*, and a *rock of offence* to *both the houses of Israel* [l].—This is the *Lord's doing*, and it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the *day*, which *the Lord* hath made; we will rejoice and be glad [m].—Behold I lay *in Zion*, *for a foundation*, *a stone*; a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation; he that *believeth* shall not be *confounded* [n].—I will do a marvellous work among this people. The *wisdom of their wise men* shall *perish*, and the *understanding* of their *prudent men* shall be *hid* [o].——Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: Behold thy king cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and *riding upon an ass*, and a colt the foal of an ass [p].—I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The *glory of this latter house* shall be greater than of the *former*; and in this place will I give *peace*, saith the Lord of hosts [q].—

[k] Mic. iv. 2.
[l] Isaiah viii. 14.
[m] Psalm cxviii. 23, 24.
[n] Isaiah xxviii. 16.
[o] Isaiah xxix. 14.
[p] Zech. ix. 9.
[q] Hag. ii. 7, 9.

Then

Then shall the *eyes of the blind* be opened, and the *ears of the deaf* shall be unstopped. Then shall the *lame* man leap as an hart, and the *tongue of the dumb* man shall sing [r].—He shall bring out the *prisoners*, and them that sit *in darkness*, out of the prison-house [s].—He shall say to the *prisoners*, Go forth; to them that sit in *darkness*, Shew yourselves [t].—He shall *feed his flock* like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young [u].—They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor the sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them, shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them. They shall feed in the ways, and their pasture shall be in all high places [x].

[r] Isaiah xxxv. 5. It is observed, that no Prophet wrought such miracles as these, but Christ.

[s] Isaiah xliii. 7. The idea of a prison, and prisoners, is very often applied to a state of heathenism.

[t] Isaiah xlix. 9. [u] Isaiah xl. 11.

[x] Isaiah xlix. 10.

SEC-

SECTION IV.

Containing such Prophecies as relate to the Death, Atonement, Resurrection, and Exaltation of the Messiah.

Yea, even mine own *familiar friend*, in whom I trusted, who did also eat of my bread, hath laid great *wait for me*[y].—And I said, if ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear; so they weighed for my price *thirty pieces of silver*, and I cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord[z].—*Smite* the *shepherd*, and the *sheep* shall be *scattered*[a].—He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he *opened not his mouth*: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is *dumb*, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation[b]?—False witnesses did rise up

[y] Psal. xli. 9. [z] Zech. xi. 12.
[a] Zech. xiii. 7. [b] Isaiah liii. 7, 8.

against

against me; they laid to my charge things that I knew not [c].—As for me, I was like a deaf man, and heard not; and as one that is dumb, and doth not open his mouth [d].—Many *dogs* are come about me, and the counsel of the wicked hath inclosed me [e].—I gave my *back to the smiters*, and my *cheeks* to them that plucked off the hair. I hid not my face from shame and *spitting* [f].—They shall *smite* the judge of Israel with *a rod upon the cheek* [g].—They gave me *gall* to eat; and when I was thirsty, they gave me *vinegar* to drink [h].—They *pierced* my *hands* and my *feet*. They *parted my garments* among them, and *cast lots on my vesture* [i].—And one shall say, What are these *wounds in thy hands*? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends [k].—My God, my God, look upon me; why hast thou forsaken me?—All they that go by

[c] Psal. xxxv. 11. [d] Psal. xxxviii. 13.

[e] Psal. xxii. 16. This Prophecy is descriptive of the Messiah's being put into the hands of the *heathen*. The word *dog* was universally applied by the Jews to the heathen. Thus our Saviour too applies it. See Matt. xv. 26.

[f] Isaiah l. 6. [g] Mic. v. 1.

[h] Psal. lxix. 21. [i] Psal. xxii. 16, 18.

[k] Zech. xiii. 6.

laugh

laugh me to ſcorn: they ſhoot out their lips, and ſhake their heads, ſaying, *He truſted in God to deliver him; let him deliver him, if he will have him*[l].—I will ſhew wonders in the heavens, and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of ſmoke. The *ſun* ſhall be turned into *darkneſs*, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come. And it ſhall come to paſs, that whoever ſhall call on the name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved[m]. —Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to *finiſh the tranſgreſſion*, and to *make an end of ſins*, and to make *reconciliation for iniquity*, and to bring in *everlaſting righteouſneſs*, and to ſeal up the viſion and prophecy, and to *anoint the moſt Holy*. Know therefore and underſtand, that from the going forth of the commandment to reſtore and to build Jeruſalem, unto the Meſſiah the Prince, ſhall be ſeven weeks, and threeſcore and two weeks: the ſtreets ſhall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threeſcore and two weeks ſhall *Meſſiah be cut off*, but *not for himſelf*[n].—Surely he hath *borne our griefs*, and *carried our ſorrows:* yet we did eſteem him ſtricken,

[l] Pſal. xxii. 1, 7, 8. [m] Joel ii. 30, &c.
[n] Dan. ix. 24, &c.

smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was *wounded for our transgressions*, he was *bruised for our iniquities:* the chastisement of *our* peace was upon *him*, and with *his* stripes *we* are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on *him* the *iniquity of us all.* It pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief. Thou shalt make his *soul an offering for sin.* He hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was *numbered with transgressors*, and he shall bear the *sins of many*, and make *intercession for transgressors* [o].—And I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace, and of supplications: and *they shall look* upon *him, whom they have pierced*, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for an only son [p].—A *bone* of him shall *not be broken* [q].—In that day there shall be a *fountain opened* to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusa-

[o] Isaiah liii. 4, &c. There are similar expressions in the 40th Psalm: *My sins have taken such hold of me, that I am not able to look up;* is a passage explained by 1 Pet. ii. 24. *Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.* Indeed the whole 40th Psalm is applied by many learned expositors to Christ.

[p] Zech. xii. 10. [q] Ex. xii. 46.

lem for *ſin*, and for *uncleanneſs*[r].—He made his *grave with the wicked*, and with the *rich in his death*[s].—Why do the heathen ſo furiouſly rage together? The kings of the earth ſtand up; the *rulers take counſel againſt the Lord*, and againſt his *anointed*. He that dwelleth in heaven ſhall laugh them to ſcorn. The Lord ſhall have them in deriſion[t].—Thou ſhalt not leave my *ſoul* in *hell*; neither ſhalt thou ſuffer thine *holy One* to ſee *corruption*[u].—After two days he will revive us; on the *third day* he will *raiſe us up*, and we ſhall live in his ſight[x].—I know that my *Redeemer liveth*, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the earth[y].—I will ranſom *them from the power of the grave*: I will *redeem* them from *death*: O death, I will be thy plague: O grave, I will be thy deſtruction[z].—The Lord ſaid unto my Lord, ſit thou on my right hand, till I make thine ene-

[r] Zech. xiii. 1.
[s] Pſal. ii. 1, &c.
[t] Iſaiah liii. 9.
[u] Pſal. xvi. 10.

[x] Hoſ. vi. 2. In this paſſage, and in others, the Prophets ſpeak in the plural: but it was a common idea to conſider Chriſt as riſing, accompanied with all the faithful. Thus St. Paul: *If we believe that Jeſus died and roſe again; even ſo them which ſleep in Jeſus, ſhall God bring with him.*

[y] Job xix. 25.
[z] Hoſ. xiii. 14.

mies thy footſtool. The Lord ſhall ſend the rod of thy power out of Zion: be thou ruler even in the midſt of thine enemies. In the day of thy power ſhall the people offer thee free-will offerings with a holy worſhip. The Lord ſware, and will not repent: Thou art a prieſt for ever, after the order of Melchizedec[a].

I ſhall conclude this whole collection of Prophecies, with an excellent paſſage from Biſhop Hurd's Sermons on Prophecy.

"The argument from Prophecy lies merely in the evidence produced, that certain paſſages were delivered in the Old Teſtament; and have been fulfilled by certain correſpondent events related in the New. The argument doth in no degree depend on faith; but is calculated to produce it. It is equally ſtrong, or equally weak, to a Chriſtian, or a

[a] Pſal. cx. 1, &c. The whole Pſalm from whence this paſſage is taken, is commonly contraſted with the twenty-ſecond, which contains a full Prophecy of the *humiliation* of Chriſt; as this does of his *exaltation*. They are both quoted in this light frequently by our Saviour, and his Apoſtles.—The ſeventy-ſecond and eighty-ninth Pſalms ſeem to relate to the *eſtabliſhment of the Meſſiah's kingdom*. They are full of expreſſions, which cannot poſſibly relate to David; or to any other ſubject.

Jew,

Jew, or an unbeliever—the ſole point in queſtion being this, whether ſuch things, as were prophetically delivered, appear to have been fulfilled—a point, on which common ſenſe, and common honeſty will equally decide, on every ſuppoſition [b]."

[b] Sermon v. p. 154.

CLASS II.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

THE most careless reader of the Prophetical parts of the Old and New Testament can scarcely fail to notice, that there are several strong intimations, and many direct and clear predictions concerning a Power, a Person, or a succession of Persons, that were to arise in the world, and either deceitfully arrogate to themselves the place and office of Christ, or exercise a direct enmity and opposition to Him and his Religion.—Such is the "ANTICHRIST," or "the many ANTICHRISTS," spoken of in the New Testament[a]. The characters

[a] It may perhaps be necessary to apprize the unlearned Reader, that the term *Antichrist* (Ἀντίχριστος) is an epithet *generally* meaning any power or persons acting in any respect in opposition to Christ or his doctrines. Its *particular* meaning is to be collected from those passages of Scripture,

characters and properties of these Powers or Persons, the dignity which they were to assume, the means by which they were to recommend themselves to the world, the arts which they were to practise, and the persecution they were to carry on, to oppress the true Christians, and obtain adherents to their errors, are all clearly represented in various passages of Scripture.

Prophecies respecting ANTICHRIST.

In order to throw as much light as possible upon this subject, I shall collect the principal of these Prophecies into one point of view, before I venture to offer any observations upon them, excepting only the Prophecies of Daniel. These, as they will be stated particularly in the course of this Chapter, I

Scripture, in which it occurs. "It may either signify one who assumes the place and office of Christ, or one who maintains a direct enmity and opposition to him." See Hurd's Introduction to the Study of the Prophecies, vol. ii. p. 10.

ſhall omit here, to avoid a length of repetition; obſerving only that Daniel expreſsly mentions a Power which was to ariſe from the *laſt* of the four great empires of the world, but was to be *divers from it.*

St. Paul, guided by the ſame ſpirit of Prophecy, directs the attention of the early Chriſtian converts to a ſimilar ſubject.

Now we beſeech you, brethren; by the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not ſoon ſhaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by ſpirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us, as that the day of Chriſt is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day ſhall not come, except there come a falling away firſt, and that man of ſin be revealed, the ſon of perdition: who oppoſeth and exalteth himſelf above all that is called God, or that is worſhipped; ſo that he as God ſitteth in the temple of God, ſhewing himſelf that he is God. Remember ye not that when I was yet with you, I told you theſe things? And now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time. For the myſtery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth, will let until he be taken out

of

of the way. And then ſhall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord ſhall conſume with the ſpirit of his mouth, and ſhall deſtroy with the brightneſs of his coming: even him, whoſe coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and ſigns, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs in them that periſh, becauſe they received not the love of the truth, that they might be ſaved[b].

The Apoſtle reſumes the ſame ſubject in his firſt Epiſtle to Timothy, and forewarns him of ſome great Apoſtaſy, that was at ſome future time to happen; and he characterizes this great event by ſuch peculiar and ſtriking circumſtances, as may lead *us*, who live in theſe *later* ages, at once to diſcover the particular perſons to whom the deſcription is applicable.

Now the ſpirit ſpeaketh expreſsly, that in the latter times ſome ſhall depart from the faith, giving heed to ſeducing ſpirits, and doctrines of devils; ſpeaking lies in hypocriſy, having their conſcience ſeared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abſtain from meats, which God hath created to be received with

[b] 2 Theſſ. ii. 1—10.

thankſgiving

thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth[c].

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come: for men shall be lovers of their ownselves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further; for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

For the time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lust shall they heap to themselves teachers, having

[c] 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3.

itching

itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables[d].

A Power, similar to that described by St. Paul, is likewise predicted by St. John.

Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son.

And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God. And this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world[e].

But of such a Power a more full description is given in the Revelations, under the

[d] 2 Tim. iii. 1—5. 7, 8, 9. 13. iv. 9, 4.
[e] 1 John, ii. 18, 19. 22. iv. 3.

symbols

ſymbols of a horrible animal, which is repreſented riſing from a ſtormy ocean, and becoming the object of aſtoniſhment to all who beheld it;—and of a creature which riſing afterwards out of the earth, became equally formidable.

And I ſtood upon the ſand of the ſea, and ſaw a beaſt riſe up out of the ſea, having ſeven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blaſphemy. And the beaſt which I ſaw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his ſeat, and great authority. And I ſaw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed, and all the world wondered after the beaſt. And they worſhipped the dragon, which gave power unto the beaſt: and they worſhipped the beaſt, ſaying, Who is like unto the beaſt? Who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth, ſpeaking great things and blaſphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blaſphemy againſt God, to blaſpheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given

unto

unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth, and them that dwell therein, to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth, in the sight of men. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, That they should make an image to the beast which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as

many

many as would not worship the image of the beast, should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six[f].

And St. John afterwards foretells its downfall.

And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abun-

[f] Rev. xiii. 1—18.

dance

dance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double, according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her[5].

Another great Power is likewise predicted; the description of it is marked with many striking symbols and characteristics, and its progress and destructive ravages are clearly pointed out.

And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

[5] Rev. xviii. 1—8.

And

And he opened the bottomless pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth; and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months; and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breast-plates as it were breast-plates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. And they had a king

over

over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue he hath his name Apollyon. One woe is past; and behold, there come two woes more hereafter. And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breast-plates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not wor-

ſhip devils, and idols of gold and ſilver, and braſs, and ſtone, and of wood, which neither can ſee, nor hear, nor walk. Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their ſorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts[h].

St. Peter and St. Jude expreſsly ſpeak of a great apoſtaſy from the Chriſtian faith, when falſe teachers ſhould tempt Chriſtians to the greateſt diſſoluteneſs of conduct, and poiſon their minds with Infidelity.

But there were falſe prophets alſo among the people, even as there ſhall be falſe teachers among you, who privily ſhall bring in damnable hereſies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themſelves ſwift deſtruction. And many ſhall follow their pernicious ways, by reaſon of whom the way of truth ſhall be evil ſpoken of. And through covetouſneſs ſhall they with feigned words make merchandize of you: whoſe judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation ſlumbereth not. For if God ſpared not the angels that ſinned, but caſt them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkneſs, to be reſerved unto judgment; and ſpared not the old world, but ſaved

[h] Rev. ix. 1—21.

Noah,

Noah, the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemning them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; and delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds). The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: but chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities: whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord. But these, as natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not, and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the daytime. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adul-

 tery,

tery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls; an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; but was rebuked for his iniquity. The dumb ass speaking with man's voice, forbad the madness of the prophet. These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true

proverb,

proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire. This second Epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance; that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy Prophets, and of the commandment of us the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour. Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water, and in the water; whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the

day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness; looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God; wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless. And account that the long suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; as also in all his Epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. But grow in

grace,

grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and ever. Amen[i].

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words; having men's persons in admiration because of advantage. But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the spirit[k].

[i] 2 Pet. ii, iii.
[k] Jude 4, 8, 16, 17, 18, 19.

Proposed APPLICATION *of the above Prophecies.*

From all these descriptions taken together, it clearly appears that A POWER, sometimes represented as the *little horn* [l], the *man of sin*, the *Antichrist*, the *beast*, the *harlot*, the *star fallen from heaven*, the *false Prophet*, the *dragon*, or as the operation of *false teachers*, was to be expected to arise in the Christian world, to persecute, oppress, and delude the Disciples of Christ, corrupt the doctrines of the primitive church, introduce the grossest immorality, enact new laws, and establish its dominion over the minds of mankind.

Such are the names, the characteristics, and the qualities of this power of Antichrist, which I consider to be THE POWER OF THE DRAGON himself—explained by the angel, to be that old serpent which is the Devil or Satan [m]—the old enemy of mankind, beginning and ending his rebellious war with *deceit* and *lies*.—Cast from his throne of *Pagan* Rome when Christianity was established in the seat of empire, and the trium-

[l] Daniel vii. 8. [m] Rev. xx. 2.

phant

phant church enjoyed a ſhort repoſe, he returned *ſecretly* to the conteſt, and diſturbed its peace by hereſies and conſequent animoſities, corrupted it through the medium of proſperity, and reduced it, excepting only a very ſmall part, to a ſtate requiring correction and puniſhment, for having yielded to temptations which obedience to the laws of its divine Maſter would have enabled it to reſiſt.—Then was the Dragon again permitted to exalt himſelf to the throne of this world—But in the ſame manner as the captivity of the Jews was *previouſly* limited to the term of 70 years, to prove it the puniſhment allotted by God, and *not* the *conqueſt of the heathen* over his people; ſo the *reign* of the Dragon or Antichriſt was *previouſly* limited [n] to 1260 years, to prove that the ſufferings of the church are by the appointment of God, and *not* the *triumph of the Dragon* over the church of Chriſt.—Babylon was deſtroyed at the expiration of the 70 years; and when the 1260 years ſhall be expired, "the Dragon—ſhall be bound and caſt into the bottomleſs pit [o]."

[n] See Daniel vii. 25. Rev. xi. 3. Pyle on the Revelations, p. 80.

[o] Rev. xx. 2.

If

If we follow the course of history as connected with Christianity, we first discover the existence of this Power in a general sense in the age of St. John, when the Gnostic and other heresies began to arise; for it is acknowledged that many of these Prophecies allude to the different *heresies* that *have* troubled, and *do* trouble the church. These however are of a fluctuating nature; they rise, spread, decline, increase again, or die away, when "their folly becomes manifest to all." But there appear to be three great *forms* of Antichrist, which were to *continue stedfastly* in *great power*, and assume much more alarming appearances of corruption, persecution, and hostility; and it is to these we now direct our attention.

It will be the object of the three following Chapters to shew, from the application of Prophecy to History, and to the remarkable train of events which are *now* passing in the world, how exactly POPERY, MAHOMETANISM, and INFIDELITY correspond with the characters given in Scripture of the POWER of ANTICHRIST, which was to prevail a certain time for the especial trial and punishment of the corrupted church of Christ.

Ob-

Objections obviated.

But considering the strenuous efforts which are now made to undermine the credit of Prophecy, by the continual cry of *vague language*, *uncertain meaning*, and *contradictory assertions*, uttered by artifice, and echoed by ignorance,—I shall first endeavour to prove, not only that the Prophecies themselves are clear, determinate, and harmonious, but that the different interpretations of the learned men, who have written upon this subject, will be found consistent with each other upon those points which were fairly open to their observation—and that the difference in their opinions arises from the *different views* they took of *the same Power*, without having sufficiently considered that this power was to appear in various forms in different ages of the world.—To this end it will be unnecessary to mention the very numerous circumstances concerning which they agree; and these are indeed, in general, the most important points of those Prophecies which they saw to have been fulfilled—the points in which they differ are chiefly those which the events of *later times* appear to render capable of a *clearer* explanation.

tion. And to these points will the following short account of the opinions of the principal Commentators be confined, with a view to remove some of the difficulties, and reconcile some of the different interpretations to one point of reference; and this, it is presumed, will throw considerable light upon those parts of the prophetical writings which have been most violently attacked, and therefore will materially serve the great cause, which it is the object of this work to support.

It is important to observe, that if the Prophecies of the Old Testament are allowed to admit of a primary and of a secondary accomplishment, there appears to be no reason why a similar mode of interpretation should not be adopted respecting the Prophecies of the New Testament. Yet this point has scarcely ever been attended to.—Protestants, suffering under the power of the Papacy, or insensibly led by their religious opinions, have seen the *whole* of Antichrist in the Church of Rome, or some power or powers connected with it.—They saw the Prophecy to be in many parts *clearly* applicable to the Church of Rome, and they looked for no other accomplishment; though the difficulty, with which many passages are brought to ap-

ply

ply to this object, indicates it to be but a primary or partial fulfilment; and this difficulty led to differences of opinion, which, to the eye of superficial readers, appear to have thrown an obscurity over the whole subject. It is clear however from the Prophecies themselves, that a long series of time is required for their fulfilment; and though it is *designed* that we should see *as much* of the Prophecies fulfilling *in our own time* as to *guard* us against the evils and dangers prevalent in those times, we should be cautious in *restricting* the sense of any to one particular *period*, excepting those which are evidently thus confined by Scripture. If it be obviously absurd to imagine we can judge with certainty respect g the *time* and *manner* in which events plainly predicted will be accomplished in future, it is equally so to imagine that our ancestors could judge of the present times as clearly as we can do. Some portion of novelty therefore in an interpretation can be no objection to its truth, provided it harmonizes with established opinion concerning the principal points of Prophecy itself.

"It is a part of this Prophecy," (says Sir I. Newton, in his Observations on the Apocalypse,

calypse, which he considers as so closely connected with the Prophecies of Daniel, as "making together but one complete Prophecy") "that it should not be" (fully) "understood before the last age of the world; and therefore it makes for the credit of the Prophecy, that it is not yet understood. But if the last age—the age of opening these things—be now approaching, as by the great successes of late interpreters it seems to be, we have more encouragement than ever to look into these things."—"Amongst the interpreters of the last age there is scarce one of note, who hath not made *some discovery* worth knowing; and thence I seem to gather that God is about opening these mysteries."

These scattered lights thrown upon different parts of the subject must greatly assist other Commentators in the progress of their *later* researches; and we may surely indulge the hope, that the *increasing* clearness of this Prophecy will operate with *increasing* power, as the time of its fulfilment draws nearer. "And the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to God," *previous* to the seventh trumpet, which is to "finish these mysteries of God."

We

We may further obſerve, that the difference of opinion among Commentators upon *particular parts* of a Prophecy, does not invalidate their teſtimony as a proof of the truth of thoſe *great points*, in which they agree; nor even the *preciſion* of the Prophecy itſelf in *all* its parts, though that preciſion cannot be ſeen by us till the courſe of events preſents it to our view.—For example, all agree that the corruption and diſtreſs of the church in the later ages of the world, and the final triumph of our Lord over all his enemies, have been clearly foretold in the Old and in the New Teſtament. But whether the reign of Antichriſt be the eſtabliſhment of the Papal power, or of Mahometaniſm, or of Infidelity and Atheiſm, or of all united, may be diſputed till *events determine* the queſtion; according as the different writers are influenced by ſituation, courſe of ſtudy, turn of mind, and attention to paſſing circumſtances, or now *perhaps*, by political principles; for in no times was *caution* in interpretation ever more neceſſary than in theſe, when *Party Spirit* in religion and in politics is ſo prevalent as to mingle itſelf almoſt imperceptibly "with the thoughts of almoſt every man's heart." If, however, the *preſent* are times of greater *general* diſ-

 treſs

tresſ and alarm than hiſtory can furniſh any account of—if the *ſeries* of Prophecies and their correſponding events that are *paſt* and *generally acknowledged* to be *underſtood*, is brought down near enough to our own times to mark *whereabouts* we are in the *ſeries of trumpets and vials*—it will be ſurely difficult to deny that "the Antichriſt *is* come," and that "the judgments of God are" *now* "abroad in the earth," though the *appropriation* of the title of Antichriſt to any particular power, or united powers, be left undecided. "If indeed it be true, as the Romaniſts pretend, that this part of the Prophecy is not yet fulfilled, and that *Antichriſt will come only for a little time, before the general judgment*[p], it would be in vain to enquire who, or what he is; we ſhould ſplit upon the ſame rock as the Fathers have done; it would better become us to ſay with Calmet, that, "*as the reign of Antichriſt is ſtill remote*, we cannot ſhew the accompliſhment of the Prophecies with regard to him:" but if the ſyſtem which I preſume to offer concerning *the power of Antichriſt* be right, it will appear that theſe different opinions of the

[p] Newton, vol. i. p. 476.

Proteſtants

Protestants and Papists, derived from *partial* views of the subject, are not wholly incompatible with each other.

The PAPAL POWER *one Branch or Form of Antichrist.*

With respect to the commonly received opinion, that the Church of Rome is Antichrist, the Divines of the Church of England, as well as most of the Divines of the Protestant churches abroad, who have written upon the subject, concur in maintaining, that certain of these Prophecies of Daniel, of St. Paul, and St. John, that have been quoted, point directly to the Church of Rome. And the members of that Church cannot complain, that the application of these Prophecies has been made by men incompetent to the discussion of such a subject; for perhaps, in the whole compass of the learned world, it would be difficult to find those who possessed more candour, learning, diligence, acuteness, or

zeal for the discovery of truth, than the writers who have turned their attention this way.

The subject has been examined and illustrated, and this important point has been determined by Mede and Newton, Warburton, Daubuz and Clarke, Lowman and Hurd, Jurieu, Vitringa, and many other illustrious members of the Protestant Churches.

The first Reformers likewise, in the most strong and explicit terms, charged the See of Rome with her Antichristian spirit, and urged, in their own defence and vindication, the authority of those Prophetical warnings that encouraged all true Christians "to depart out of her communion, that they might not be partakers of her plagues." This was the constant exhortation of Wickliff, of Luther, and of Jewell; and such was the language of their followers. They were sensible of the value of the arguments drawn from these Prophecies in favour of their secession and separation from a corrupted and erroneous Church, and they failed not to oppose them to their adversaries with the greatest zeal and energy.

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That their conduct was highly justifiable is clear from what we may collect from the most authentic records of Ecclesiastical History; because we find that the very same interpretation was given to these predictions, not only long before any controversy was moved between the Papists and the Protestants, but before any such distinctions of Christians were known to the world.

It was the reigning opinion of the Christians of the earliest times, that Antichrist would appear soon after the fall of the Roman Empire. They looked forward to this event as so replete with alarm and danger to the church, that it was a custom to introduce particular prayers in their liturgy for the continuance of the Empire of Pagan Rome, that the coming of Antichrist might be delayed. St. Jerom, who flourished in the fourth century, in his commentary upon the Prophecies of Daniel, delivers the general opinion of his age in these remarkable words; "Let us assert, in conformity with the sentiments of all the Ecclesiastical writers, that towards the end of the world, when the Roman Empire shall be destroyed, ten kings shall come, and divide the Empire, and an eleventh king shall

arise, in whom Satan shall dwell corporeally, who shall subdue three of these ten kings."

St. Cyril, who likewise flourished in the fourth century, asserted expressly, "that the eleventh king mentioned by Daniel, is Antichrist, who shall violently seize, by magical and wicked contrivance, the Roman power."

In the sixth century, Gregory the Great, in the most plain and direct manner, in his addresses to the most eminent persons of his own time, scrupled not to apply the Prophecies concerning the beast in the Revelations, the man of sin, and the apostasy from the faith, mentioned by St. Paul, to him who should presume to claim the title of Universal Priest, or Universal Bishop, in the Christian Church. "I affirm confidently," said he, "that whoever calls himself universal Bishop, or is desirous to be so called, shows himself, by this pride and elation of heart, to be the forerunner of Antichrist." Such was his language, intended to convey a severe censure upon the Patriarch of Constantinople. Yet this zealous Bishop of Rome was blind to his own situation; for no one before his time had ever carried the claims and the arrogance of Papal

supremacy

ſupremacy to ſuch a pitch, as himſelf: and it is remarkable, that his immediate ſucceſſor, Boniface III. received from the tyrant Phocas, the exact title which Gregory had thus cenſured.

At the Synod of Rheims, held in the tenth century, Arnulphus, Biſhop of Orleans, appealed to the whole Council, whether the Biſhop of Rome was not the Antichriſt of the Prophets, "ſitting in the temple of God," and perfectly correſponding with the marks which St. Paul had given of him.

In the eleventh century all the characters of Antichriſt ſeemed to be ſo united in the perſon of Pope Hildebrand, who took the name of Gregory VII. that Joannes Aventinus, a Romiſh Hiſtorian, ſpeaks of it as a ſubject in which the generality of fair, candid, and ingenuous writers agreed, that at that time began the reign of Antichriſt.—St. Barnard, in the twelfth century, employed the force of his great eloquence againſt the corruptions of the See of Rome. "The Popes," ſaid he, "call themſelves the miniſters of Chriſt, and they ſerve Antichriſt. The beaſt of the Revelations, to whom was given a mouth ſpeaking blaſphemies, and to war with the

faints, feizes the chair of St. Peter, like a lion ready for his prey." And to clofe this detail, the Albigenfes and Waldenfes, who may be called the Proteftants of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, exprefsly afferted in their declarations of faith, that the Church of Rome was the whore of Babylon.

Thus have we a regular chain of teftimony[q] to prove the fucceffive progrefs of this opinion within the period alluded to, viz. from the time of the Apoftles to the Reformation. In proportion as the authority of the Popes prevailed and extinguifhed freedom of enquiry, thefe explanations of the Prophecies were checked, except in the cafe of fome few perfons, who had boldnefs enough to affert them publicly, in defiance of the decrees of the Conclave, that menaced them with excommunication. The application therefore of thefe Prophecies to Papal Rome, far from being a *novel opinion*, publifhed to vindicate the conduct of the Reformers and their adherents, was authorifed by *an ancient* and *uninterrupted tradition* in the Church, grounded

[q] All the parts of this chain are clearly fhown in the learned and ingenious Introduction of Bifhop Hurd to the Study of the Prophecies; from whence I have chiefly felected the above detail.

upon

upon *Prophecy*, and the words of the *Apostles*, and was fully justified by the *declarations*, *conduct*, and *institutions of the Papists themselves*, when exercising their oppressive authority over the Christian world [r].

[r] It is curious to inquire whether the Papists behold in this prophetical picture any likeness of themselves. They imagine they view it in imperial Rome elated by her victories, exulting in her sensuality, and her spoils; polluted by idolatry, persecuting the people of God, and finally falling like the first Babylon: whilst a new and holy city, represented by their own communion, filled with the spotless votaries of the Christian faith, rises out of its ruins, and the victory of the cross is completed over the temples of Paganism. This scheme is adopted by Bossuet, Grotius, and Hammond. These eminent men have indeed discovered a faint and imperfect resemblance; but have they pointed out the *particular nice* and *distinct* traces of likeness? Eager to establish their scheme, they run into a manifest absurdity, by violating the order of time, disregarding the opinions of the primitive Christians, and turning away their eyes from the *appropriate* descriptions of the Prophets.

The MAHOMETAN POWER, *another Branch or Form of Antichrist.*

All Commentators agree that the ninth chapter of Revelations refers to Mahometanism, and the Saracenic and Turkish powers. It is therefore clear, that the present generation is still living under the influence of the sixth trumpet, when the *four angels* [that is, the four Turkish Sultanies] *were loosed, which were bound in the great river Euphrates*[s]. The time for their conquest was exactly limited; and history ascertains that this time was not exceeded; but *nothing* is said in this chapter of the *duration* of their dominion. However, since it is declared, that "in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, the mystery of God shall be finished[t]," it is *certain* that this dominion must be destroyed towards the end of the sixth trumpet, or "when the seventh shall *begin* to sound."

Thus far is *clear*.—But whether the Mahometan Power may be considered as properly the Antichrist, foretold in the prophecy of Daniel, has been doubted by many writers,

[s] Rev. ix. 14. [t] Rev. x. 7.

who

who refer that Prophecy solely to the Papal Power of Rome. This point will be examined presently.—The following observations I would be understood to offer as *conjecture* only; but I dare not offer even a conjecture relative to Prophecies which are not yet fulfilled, without stating the grounds upon which it is founded.—It is very generally allowed that the six vials are poured out during the sixth trumpet, and that the seventh trumpet and seventh vial are contemporary.—The sixth vial is poured out upon the great river Euphrates; "and the water thereof is dried up, that the way of the kings of the East may be prepared." Considering the Turkish power as originating in the Euphrates (if I may so speak), and that this river runs through the Asiatic part of their empire, I suppose the seat of the Asiatic Antichrist—the Turkish Empire,—will either suffer very considerable diminution, or be entirely removed, under the sixth vial.—This opinion does not imply the *destruction* of Mahometanism, any more than the fifth vial implies the *destruction* of Popery—but I think *both* the fifth and sixth vials will produce the decay and downfal of the *power* of both, though both will continue to *exist* "till the time of the end." It shall be observed, that

"the

"the way for the kings of the East[w]" is "only *prepared*" by this vial; they do not even appear, nor is there any thing more said of them under that title—The explanation and the consummation of the "mystery" is reserved for the seventh trumpet—nothing even *seems* to conclude till then. The seven vials *are poured out in succession*; but it does not follow that one *ends* when another *begins*; on the contrary, I think it *highly probable* that the first will *continue* to the seventh. We find that the *first* of the seven vials was poured out upon the men "which had the mark of the beast, and upon them (also) which worshipped his image[x]."—In short, after considering the *contents* of the *vials*, and comparing them with history and the present state of the world, I think it appears that the seventh vial will find all the six former vials, *plaguing* the earth—the first hav-

[w] Various have been the conjectures concerning these "Kings of the East;" some believe them to be the Eastern nations—some the *ten* tribes of Israel concealed in Tartary, or India—some the Jews, or the twelve tribes collectively from the whole world—some, the restoration of the Christian religion in its antient churches.—It is not perhaps impossible to reconcile most of these opinions with each other.

[x] Rev. xvi. 2.

ing

ing had the *longest* and the sixth the *shortest* run. According to this mode of interpretation, Antichrist in all its forms—Heretical, Papal, Mahometan, and Infidel—will be upon the stage in the *last* scene of this great drama, and will *all* have their place in the final catastrophe.

General View of the Prophecies of Daniel. First Vision.—The IMAGE.

Before I proceed to state the grounds upon which I have ventured to found the opinion, that Infidelity is the third branch or form of the predicted Antichrist, I must request the Reader to take a general view of the Prophecies of Daniel, which will indeed lay before him a complete view of the whole subject, and afford additional evidence to the harmony of the prophetic scheme.

The diffidence natural to a mind strongly impressed with the importance and sacred nature of the subject it is about to discuss, renders me anxious to conduct the Reader by a regular

regular train of established interpretation and accomplishment, to the great points which form a material part of my hypothesis; and I trust it will be allowed, that the following short account of the Prophecies, concerning the four great empires, places the *different origin* of the powers which I apprehend to be *distinct* from each other, in a conspicuous light. Upon a matter of such high importance the serious inquirer after truth will value caution more than brevity.

"The golden head of the image [y]," which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream, indisputably signifies the Babylonian or Assyrian Empire.

"The breast and *arms* of silver"—the *Medo-Persian* Empire.—The arms are generally supposed to signify the *two* kingdoms of the Medes and Persians, which united and de-

[y] Daniel ii. 31, &c. It appears from antient coins and medals, that cities and people were often represented by figures of men and women. A great terrible human figure was therefore an emblem of human power and dominion; and the various metals of which Nebuchadnezzar's image was composed, may be supposed to typify the relative importance of the various kingdoms which should arise in the world. Newton, Diss. 13.

stroyed

ſtroyed the Babylonian, and formed the Perſian Empire.

"The belly and thighs of braſs"—the Grecian Empire.—The Greeks were famous for their brazen armour.—The belly is ſuppoſed to diſtinguiſh the Macedonian Empire under Alexander; and the thighs, the Syrian kingdom under the Seleucidæ, and the Egyptian kingdom under the Lagidæ, or Ptolemies; which were *two* of the *four horns* which we ſhall find came up in the place of the *great horn* of the he-goat; that is, two of the diviſions of Alexander's dominions after his death —the other two, Macedonia and Bithynia, were ſoon ſubdued by theſe, and became parts of their kingdoms.

"The legs of iron, and the feet of iron mixed with clay"—the Roman Empire in *all* its ſtates.—The two legs of iron are ſuppoſed by ſome to mean the two Roman Conſuls; and it is certain that the ſimilitude of the Conſular government was continued after the government became Imperial; for the Emperors had almoſt conſtantly *Aſſociates* in the Empire, beſides continuing the form of the Conſular magiſtracy.—It is in harmony with the

the Prophet's explanation to suppose the iron legs to denote also the strength with which this Empire supported the vast weight, which it obtained by conquest over the three former kingdoms.

"The feet of iron mixed with clay," I suppose to mean the *eastern* and *western* Roman Empires; for the Empire was certainly immediately *weakened* when it was thus *divided*— "it became partly *broken*, or *brittle*."

"The ten toes" were ten kingdoms which arose afterwards, *all within* the bounds of the *antient Roman Empire*—"The iron was mixed with miry clay," to denote, as some think, a peculiar degree of defilement during these periods of its existence, or "the mixture of barbarous nations with which the Roman people was defiled." But the latter supposition is not, I think, at all probable. The Jews interpret, "and they shall mingle with the seed of men," as alluding to the mixture of Jews (emphatically termed *men*) with all these nations, which yet remain *distinct* from them—"do not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

Supposing the *feet* to be the *divided Empire*, the *ten toes* must belong to *both parts* of it; we are *not* therefore confined to the *western* Empire for the *ten kingdoms*.

We must, I think, conclude, that the description of this image contains the history of the Roman Empire in all its states; but nothing is said to Nebuchadnezzar of an *eleventh* kingdom. Information concerning *this* kingdom, which was to be of a different kind, that is, partly of a spiritual nature—and the power of which was to be exerted *within* the Empire, and *while* it subsisted in its *last form* of ten kingdoms—was reserved to be given to the Prophet.—The *fate* however of this fourth Empire is imparted to the monarch: as that of the three former Empires had been.—"A stone cut out without hands, smote the image upon his *feet*, that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces."

"Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.—

earth.—In the days of these kings (that is, of the *four* great kingdoms, for the three former had *not* been *destroyed;* their *sovereignty* was gone, but "their *lives* were prolonged for a season and a time[z]") shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest the stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold[a]."

As the fourth or Roman Empire is described in its several states, so is the fifth kingdom, or the kingdom of the Messiah, described in its two states. Mr. Mede distinguishes these by the name of *regnum lapidis*, the kingdom of the stone, and *regnum montis*, the kingdom of the mountain.

This kingdom was set up by the God of heaven, "when Christ came into the world" —*He* was "the stone cut out of the mountain" without human means, *while* the Ro-

[z] See Sir I. Newton. [a] Dan. ii. 35, &c.

man

man Empire was ſtrong as iron; but it did not ſmite the image till a *later* period, when it had "*feet* of iron mixed with clay;" and then the *power* of the feet was ſoon *broken* into ten parts, or toes, in which ſtate it yet exiſts. The Empire was *divided* before the *viſible* conqueſt of Chriſt over "the dragon," or the power of *Pagan Rome*, by the eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity in the Empire.

"The powers of darkneſs were *then* ſhaken," but (as we ſhall find when we conſider the little horn in the viſion of Daniel) they are ſuffered to remain in a weakened ſtate *till* "the *ſtone* ſhall become the *mountain*, and fill the whole earth," when "the kingdoms of the world ſhall become the kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Chriſt."

The kingdom of the mountain is then to be conſidered as yet *entirely* future.

Second Vision.—The FOUR BEASTS, *and the* LITTLE HORN *of Antichrist.*

The four Empires which were exhibited to Nebuchadnezzar in the form of a great and terrible image, were represented to Daniel in the shape of great wild animals,—such emblems and hieroglyphics being usual among the eastern nations [b]. This vision is much more particular in its descriptions—mentions many circumstances relating to each kingdom, and points out an extraordinary power, not even named in the dream of the image, which was to arise *during* the *last* state of the fourth or last kingdom—was to continue "until a time, and times, and the dividing of time," (that is, 1260 years according to the common interpretation) but *not beyond* the duration of these kingdoms of "iron mixed with miry clay;" because the *kingdom of the mountain* is to *destroy every* adverse power, and is itself to reign over the *whole earth:* and we have seen that it was to strike the whole image down to the ground, when in this *last* period of its power, and to establish itself in its room.

[b] Daniel vii. 2, &c.

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The first beast, or the Babylonian or Assyrian Empire, is represented "like a lion with eagle's wings," "the wings whereof were plucked" at the time of the delivery of this Prophecy in the reign of Belshazzar, for the Medes and Persians were then encroaching upon it.

The second beast, or the Medo-Persian Empire, is "like to a bear, and it raised itself up on one side, and it had three ribs (or tusks) in the mouth of it, between the teeth of it; and they said unto it, Arise, devour much flesh."

It is well known that the Persians soon "raised themselves up" above the Medes, and that they were remarkable for cruelty and oppression. The three ribs (or tusks) in the teeth of this voracious animal, are supposed to be the kingdoms of Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt, which greatly strengthened the Empire [c], but which were dreadfully oppressed by it.

The third beast, or the Grecian Empire, is "like a leopard, which had upon the back of

[c] See Bp. Chandler and Sir I. Newton.

it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads." The leopard is a spotted animal, and remarkable for its swiftness, and is therefore a striking emblem of the different manners of the nations whom Alexander commanded, and of the rapidity of his conquests. Some think the four wings are designed for Assyria, Media, Persia, and Grecia—others, Persia, Greece, Egypt, and India, as well as to denote peculiar swiftness. The four heads are evidently the four kingdoms, into which the Empire was divided after the death of Alexander, because the four horns of the he-goat are thus explained by the angel. "And dominion was given to it," "sheweth," as Jerome saith, "that it was not owing to the fortitude of Alexander, but proceeded from the will of the Lord"—"and indeed unless he had been thus assisted, how could he in so short a time have brought all the countries, from Greece as far as India, into subjection[d]?"

The fourth beast, or the Roman Empire in all its states, "is dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, and it had great iron teeth," "and nails of *brass*," "it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue

[d] Bishop Newton, vol. i. c. 14.

with

with the feet of it; and it was *divers* from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns." This beast was so great and horrible, that no name was found for it—it had no similitude to any *known* beast. The Roman Empire was of a different nature and constitution of government from all the former kingdoms; and the length of its *duration*, and the *variety of forms* it was to assume, would scarcely admit of its being called by *any* particular name sufficiently descriptive,—"The ten horns" of this beast correspond with the "ten toes" of the image; and the "nails of *brass*" (the metal of which the Grecian Empire was formed in the image) denote the long continuance of some sort of connexion between the *Roman* and the *Grecian* Empires; or rather, I apprehend, that the Roman Empire should in part exert itself under the name of a Grecian power: and this was in fact the case, when the Roman Empire was *divided*, if not when Constantinople became the capital.

Thus far the Monarch's dream and the Prophet's vision exactly agree. But another subject is now introduced before the solemn mention of the time when "all these thrones were to be cast down," and "dominion and

glory, and a kingdom that all people, nations, and languages ſhould ſerve him, were to be given to the Son of man, for an everlaſting dominion [e];—a concluſion as exactly ſimilar to the concluſion of the dream.

While Daniel was contemplating "the ten horns, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were *three* of the firſt horns plucked up by the roots: and behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth ſpeaking great things." Daniel was greatly diſturbed by this viſion, and anxiouſly enquiring into its meaning, the angel anſwered, "Theſe great beaſts, which are four, are four kings (or kingdoms), which ſhall ariſe out of the earth" (or as it ſhould be tranſlated *in* or *upon* the earth—Daniel had ſeen theſe beaſts ſymbolically ariſe from the ſea; the angel ſpeaks of them now in plain language as *empires*) "but the ſaints of the Moſt High ſhall take the kingdom, and poſſeſs the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever."—Still was he anxious for a more *particular* explanation of the fourth beaſt, which was "ſo exceeding dreadful," "and of the ten horns that were

[e] Daniel vii. 14.

in

in his head, and of the *other* which came up, and before whom three fell, even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that ſpake very great things, whoſe look was more ſtout than his fellows [f]."—"I beheld," ſays the Prophet, whoſe attention ſeems to have been fixed upon this object of the viſion, "and the ſame horn made war with the ſaints, and prevailed againſt them; *until* the Antient of days came, and judgment was given to the ſaints of the Moſt High; and the time came that the ſaints poſſeſſed the kingdom."—And the angel thus anſwers his repeated enquiries; "The fourth beaſt ſhall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which ſhall be *divers* from *all* kingdoms, and ſhall devour the whole earth, and ſhall tread it down and break it to pieces.—And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings (or kingdoms) that ſhall ariſe; and another ſhall ariſe *after them*, and ſhall be *divers* from the firſt, and he ſhall ſubdue three kings. And he ſhall ſpeak great words againſt the Moſt High, and ſhall wear out the ſaints of the Moſt High, and think to change times and laws: and they ſhall be given into his hand, *until* a time, and times, and the dividing of time. But the judg-

[f] Daniel vii. 20, &c.

ment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. *Hitherto is the end of the matter*[g].—The angel's interpretation of this vision plainly extends to the end of the world[h]. This account of the little horn I consider then as an *epitome* of the *whole history of Antichrist*.—Keeping this idea in view, let us proceed to the next vision, which *selects* the second and third kingdoms, i. e. the Persian and the Grecian, and a "little horn which came forth out of one of the four horns[i] of the He-goat," or "the King of Grecia,"

[g] Daniel vii. 23—28.

[h] It may be observed, that the account of the little horn precisely resembles an episode in an epic poem—the history of the four kingdoms was given without it in the *image*; but *here* it is described as rising out of the *last*, and contributing to the catastrophe.

[i] The source of this figure, of *horns* for kingdoms, as Spanheim observes, must be derived from the Oriental languages, in which the same word signifies a *horn*, and a *crown*, and *power*, *strength*, and *splendour*. A horn was an emblem of royalty among the Phœnicians, and the Chaldee

Grecia," to form a *distinct* picture of a particular train of events, which we are thus naturally led to suppose will take place in the *eastern* part of the world.

Third Vision—The RAM *and the* HE-GOAT, *including* "*the* LITTLE HORN" *of the East.*

In the former vision, which was a general history of the four kingdoms, Persia was described as a *bear*, to mark its *character* for cruelty and oppression. In *this*, which shews only the rise, progress, and decline of *two* of the kingdoms, apparently with a view to the *principal* subject of it—*the little horn*, which was to arise after them—Persia is designated by its common symbol, a ram [k].

"Be-

Chaldee Paraphrasts explain the Hebrew word *keren*, *a horn*, by the term *malchutha*, which signifies a *kingdom*. Newton, c. xv.

[k] It was usual for the kings of Persia to wear a ram's head made of gold, and adorned with precious stones, instead of a diadem; for so Ammianus Marcellinus describes them. Bishop Chandler and others farther observe, that rams

"Behold there ſtood before the river, a ram which had two horns, [Media and Perſia] and the two horns were high, but one was higher than the other, and the higher [Perſia] came up laſt[1]. I ſaw the ram puſhing weſtward, and northward, and ſouthward, [it had poſſeſſion of the Eaſt] ſo that no beaſt might ſtand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great, [as in the time of Xerxes and Darius.] And as I was conſidering, behold, an he-goat came from the weſt [the king, or rather kingdom of Grecia] on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: [he came with ſuch *bounding rapidity*, that he ſeemed not to touch the ground] and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. [Alexander king of Macedon, who had firſt ſubdued Greece.] And he came to the ram that had

rams heads with horns, one higher and the other lower, are ſtill to be ſeen on the pillars at Perſepolis. Newton.

The goat is made the type of the Grecian or Macedonian Empire, becauſe the Macedonians were denominated *Ægeadæ*, or the goat's people, 200 years before the time of Daniel.—It is alſo remarkable, that Alexander's ſon by Roxana was named Alexander *Ægos*, or the ſon of the goat: and ſome of Alexander's ſucceſſors are repreſented in their coins with *goat's horns*. Newton.

[1] Daniel viii. 3, &c.

two

two horns—and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns, and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. Therefore the he-goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; [Alexander died at the height of conquest, and in the prime of life] and for it (or, instead of it) came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven. [Alexander's four Captains, who divided his kingdom; Cassander held Macedon, and Greece, and the *western* parts—Lysimachus had Thrace and Bithynia, and the *northern* regions—Ptolemy possessed Egypt and the *southern* countries—Seleucus obtained Syria and the *eastern* provinces.] And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host, and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified him-

himself, even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the *truth* to the ground; and it practised, (or wrought) and prospered."

To this description I subjoin the explanation given by the angel previous to any observations upon it—"And in the latter time of their kingdoms, [that is, of the four kingdoms which succeeded Alexander's kingdom] when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand, and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes, but he shall be broken without hand. And the vision of the evening and the morning [an Hebraism signifying a day] is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision, for it shall be for many days."

"This

"This little horn is, by the generality of interpreters both Jewish and Christian, antient and modern, supposed to mean Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, who was a great enemy and cruel persecutor of the Jews; but then all allow that Antiochus Epiphanes was a type of Antichrist[m]." Bishop Newton however, adopting the opinion of Sir Isaac Newton, leaves Antiochus wholly out of the question, and applies it to the Roman power, which first subdued Macedon and Greece, the capital kingdom of the goat; by which, he says, *the Romans became a horn of the goat.* But notwithstanding his very ingenious Dissertation[n] upon this subject, I cannot but think there remain as great reasons for applying this Prophecy in the first instance to Antiochus Epiphanes, and in the last to Antichrist, without contradicting the accuracy of its application, in *many points*, to the Romans. The plan of this Work obliges me to refer the Reader to Bishop Newton's Dissertation for a clear display of the fulfilment of this Prophecy, both by Antiochus and by the Romans; for it appears to me that he *establishes* the antient opinion even while combating it,

[m] Bishop Newton, c. 14.

[n] Bishop Newton, vol. ii. Diss. 15. See also Sir Isaac Newton.

from

from his earneſt wiſh to *appropriate* the Prophecy *wholly* to the Romans; a wiſh, which too often riſes unperceived even in the beſt minds, who, when they form a ſyſtem, deſire to ſubvert every other.—I muſt content myſelf with a few obſervations, connected with the endeavour to *harmonize* theſe ſyſtems, and to point out the *connexion* of the Prophecies.

In the main points of oppoſition to Chriſt, and of perſecution of his ſervants, all the branches of Antichriſt muſt *neceſſarily agree*; but the marks which diſtinguiſh *theſe confederate powers* from each other, appear to me very ſtrongly diſcriminated in theſe different viſions.—*All* foretel the power of Antichriſt, and contain alluſions perhaps to *all* the different forms of that power; but *each* viſion ſeems to deſcribe *one* of theſe forms with *peculiar diſtinctneſs*, while it points to *ſome* circumſtances which ſtrongly characterize *that* Power, which was to ariſe the *laſt*, and, if we rightly conjecture, will prevail the moſt, and which are not eaſily appropriated to either of the other. The ſymbol of "a little horn" is applicable to Antichriſt in the *beginnings* of all its forms—Papal, Mahometan, and Infidel. The Power of Antichriſt is ſtill the

the little horn; but as exerted in Greece and the *East*, it is described as the little horn of the *he-goat*, or the *third* empire, and this even to the present hour; for the *seat* of the *Mahometan* Empire is *Grecia*, or what was called the *Greek Empire*.—As exerted in Italy and the *West*, it is described as the little horn of the *fourth* beast, or the *fourth Empire*. But it is remarkable that in those predictions, which the angel *expressly* declares will be accomplished *towards the* end *of the appointed time*, this distinction of east and west seems to be *lost*, both in this and in the following vision (which I conceive intended *particularly* to describe the Mahometan and Papal powers), and Antichrist appears with all the subtlety and fury and universally-extended tyranny, with which we find him delineated in the Revelations under the symbol of the *second* beast, and which corresponds with the *little horn* in the vision of the four beasts, which is to be considered as an epitome of the whole history of Antichrist [o]—And this circumstance, I apprehend, intimates the *general* apostasy and persecution which is to take place during the Infidel power, which was

[o] See p. 328.

to

to *succeed* the violence of the two former, and be an *instrument of punishment* to their adherents, and of *trial* to the Church of Christ.

It is evident from the conclusion that this Prophecy of the horn of the he-goat cannot be *confined* to the Romans. It extends not only beyond the destruction of Jerusalem, but to the end of time; for, as "the image was to be broken by the stone cut out without hands," and the fourth beast was to be destroyed "because of the great words the horn spake against the Most High," so *this* horn was to be broken without hand, because "he rose up against the Prince of princes." And it is farther added, as if to prevent the Prophecy from being *restricted* to its *first* and *partial* accomplishment, "Shut thou up the vision, for it shall be for *many* days"—it refers to a long period of time, and series of events, and it cannot therefore be fully understood till much nearer the time of the end.—Let us now compare the Mahometan power with this little eastern horn, which "waxed exceeding great toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land."

The

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The Mahometan power has indeed extended itself *southward* over great part of Africa—*eastward* to Persia, Tartary, and even China, and covered *the land of Judea* with its abominations; but it never made any progress in the west or north—"It cast down some of the host, and of the stars, and stamped upon them, and magnified itself even to the prince of the host;" or "the Prince of princes." It cast down many of the *reigning powers*, took possession of the Greek empire, and overthrew all the Christian churches, or *stars* [p], established in Africa, in Arabia, and India, and almost all in Palestine, in Asia Minor, and in Greece.—Mahomet acknowledged Jesus to be a Prophet indeed; but he assumed to himself a superiority in dignity; and the cruelty, oppression, and contempt, with which Christians have been uniformly treated by his followers, are plainly denoted by his "stamping upon them." Jerusalem is designated as the principal scene, or object of the tyranny of this horn; first during the Jewish, and lastly during the Christian dispensation. Zion was the place chosen by the Almighty for the *only* Temple devoted to his worship according to the Mosaic ritual—in

[p] Rev. ii.

 this

this favoured spot was the Gospel first published to the whole world. *Here* was the one oblation once offered of the Lamb slain for the redemption of mankind—and *here* was the Christian church first established.——Antiochus took away the "daily sacrifice" for a few years—the Romans put an end to the Temple worship—but the Mahometans have profaned the place of his sanctuary—"have taken away the daily sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving" from this distinguished land, for above eleven hundred years.—It was also "*given* into their hands by reason of transgression;" this was acknowledged by the Jews and by the Romans [q] in the two former cases; and the deplorable corruption of the eastern churches, when this horn assumed the form of Mahometanism, sufficiently explains *why* an "host was given against them."—This horn has indeed "cast the truth to the ground"—for nothing can be more miserable than the internal as well as external state of the few churches which remain in the countries under the Mahometan yoke, and the Jews suffer little less oppression than the Christians.—And the artifices by which this hypocritical impostor and his successors esta-

[q] See p. 226.

blished

blished the civil and religious power of Mahometanism, and their astonishing success, can scarcely be more strongly marked than by the expression, "it *practised* and *prospered*," but which expression is not easily made applicable to the Romans.

Thus ends Daniel's account of the vision; but he adds, that he heard one saint, or angel, ask another angel, "How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice and the transgression of desolation to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot[t]?" Or, as Mr. Lowth renders it more clearly, "For how long a time shall the vision last, the daily sacrifice be taken away, and the transgression of desolation continue to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?" And it was answered, "Unto 2300 days: then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Both the question and the answer are distinctly put, and resemble Rev. xi. 2. but there is an uncertainty in the number of years; the Seventy read 2400; and Jerom informs us others read 2200. If the vision be computed from the establishment of the

[t] Daniel viii. 13.

Perſian Empire, which begins the viſion of the ram, the reading of the Seventy will carry it on to the concluſion of the ſix thouſandth year of the world. However this may be, it is remarkable that this viſion breaks off abruptly; the *end* of *this* horn is not *ſeen*, it is left in proſperity, a circumſtance which accurately correſponds with the deſcription of the *ſame power* in the ninth chapter of the Revelations. We do not ſee the *end* of *Abaddon*, or *Apollyon*, the King of the Saracen Locuſts, or of the Turkiſh horſemen from the river Euphrates—but it is to be remembered we are elſewhere told, that "the *ſixth vial* ſhall be poured out upon the river Euphrates, to *prepare* the way for the kings;"—about which time it is alſo ſaid, "the ſanctuary ſhall be wholly cleanſed," and "the bride made ready to receive her lord."

When the angel Gabriel was ſent to *explain* this viſion to Daniel, he begins with ſaying, "Underſtand, O Son of Man: for *at the time of the end* ſhall be the viſion[a]," which I preſume to mean, the train of events deſcribed in this viſion ſhall reach to the end of

[a] Daniel viii. 17.

time.

time. And after he had prepared the Prophet to receive the awful information, he further says, "Behold, I will make thee know what shall be *in the last end* of the indignation; for at the time appointed the end shall be"—meaning, I again presume, I will not only explain the general meaning of this vision, which is itself a series of punishment, but I will inform thee of other circumstances, which shall take place when the time *of this vision of indignation*, or wrath against the host and the sanctuary, *shall draw near its conclusion*—for the time is *appointed*, and the *end* of all this misery shall certainly come; and therefore take comfort from this assurance, while I reveal the awful judgments which are to take place *in the last days* of the vision.—"The ram which thou sawest having two horns, are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia, and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power."—The angel barely mentions the kingdoms of Persia and Grecia; and the four kingdoms which were to arise after Alexander, and

[t] Daniel viii. 19.

then *immediately* passes to *the latter time* of their kingdom—as if they were only mentioned to mark *the scene of action* for the formidable power which is the principal object of the message—he omits those circumstances described by the vision, which point to its *primary* and partial accomplishment by Antiochus and the Romans, and which the Prophet probably understood to relate to calamities similar to those which his people were then suffering under the power of Babylon; and goes *directly* to that *distant* period which had been before represented as so *peculiarly* dreadful in the vision of the little horn, which arose from the fourth beast.

We are then, I conceive, authorized to conjecture, that the following description points out not *only* the Mahometan power, but refers to that *other* power, which was immediately to precede the time of the end: or, in other words, be the *last form* of *Antichristian power*." —"*And in the latter time* of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up[u];" it is cer-

[u] Daniel viii, 23.

tain

tain that the power of Mahomet arose in a part of the *Grecian Empire*—and that he arose when the *eastern division* of the *Roman* Empire was considered as the *Greek Empire*, and in the *latter time of that kingdom*. It is certain too, that the corruptions of the eastern churches had arisen to their full height when this scourge of the Christian world stood up;—and that "the false Prophet, or Teacher," of Arabia, who professedly propagated his religion by the sword, is strikingly delineated by "a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences."—"And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power." As the kingdoms of the West gave their power to the Beast, or Papal Antichrist, so have the kingdoms of the East given theirs to the Mahometan Antichrist. But I conceive this is not all that is here meant—"The dragon" gave his power to the beast, and "the angel of the bottomless pit" led on the Saracenic locusts; and thus the angel may be understood to say, "The power of this horn shall be not merely that which is common to the conquerors of the East, such as the he-goat, or the four beasts in the former vision; it is to be directed and supported by super-human

art, and strength; which shall enable it to destroy *wonderfully*, to prosper and practise, and destroy the mighty, and the holy people," that is, both Jews and Christians.—"And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand," or "shall cause fraud and deceit to prosper, and he shall magnify himself, and by peace shall he destroy many," or, in times of tranquillity he shall destroy multitudes [x]." The *policy* and *craft* for which the Mahometan powers are notorious [y], unquestionably agree with this description; and the titles which their chief assumes, of "*God on Earth, The Shadow of God, Brother to the Sun and Moon, The Giver of all Earthly Crowns* [z];" as perfectly accord with the Prophetic intimation, that he should "magnify himself." Such titles were indeed common in the East, among the antient *Heathen* potentates; but they are utterly inconsistent with true religion, and have ever been so considered by Jews and genuine

[x] Wintle's Version of Daniel.

[y] "In a word, lust, arrogance, covetousness, and *the most exquisite hypocrisy*, complete their character." Maundrell, p. 149.

[z] See Ricaut's State of the Ottoman Empire.

Christians.

Christians.[a] The multitudes which allured by promised "peace," left the cross of Christ for the crescent of Mahomet; and the luxury, effeminacy, and licentiousness, which are the allowed habits and proposed rewards of the followers of this pretended Prophet, may perhaps be allowed to explain "by peace he shall destroy many;" but as this power is yet existing, we may surely suppose it may hereafter become more clear, *if* this explanation be not perfectly satisfactory.

The angel having thus intimated as I apprehend, that this formidable power should remain some time *at rest*, as it were, adds, "And he shall [*also*] stand up against the Prince of princes, but he shall be broken without hand."—The persecuting spirit of Mahometanism certainly corresponds with the opposition implied in this expression, marks its *origin*, and *distinguishes* the motives and views which actuate this power, from those which are the common causes of war and conquest among the rulers of the earth; but can hardly be considered as its full import.—If this expression be confined to the Mahometan power, we may look to the future for a more

[a] The titles assumed by the *Pope* are however strikingly similar.

literal

literal accomplishment, and suppose the angel to say, "*Besides* these wars against the *sanctuary* and the holy *people*, and the *covert* mischief which he shall be permitted to do, this power shall *at last openly direct* his opposition against the Prince of princes—then will the time come when he shall fall before him, like the image and the horn of the fourth beast in the former visions." This passage however, and several others in the latter part of this Prophecy, will be found to agree very remarkably with the *distinct picture* which I understand to be given in the Revelations, of the *Infidel power*: and if these passages be allowed to refer to *that* as well as to the Mahometan power, the meaning of the angel may be then supposed to be, "The power, of whom I *now* speak, who is to arise in *the latter times*, shall spring from the *same source*, and be of the *same nature* as the little horn in the former vision—and *his mark* shall be, *opposition* to *the Prince of princes*, as it was in the horn of the fourth beast.—By this shall these *peculiar* powers be distinguished from the kings of the earth, and by *this* shall their common fate be foreknown—they shall be broken without hand—not by the usual course of events—but they shall fall before the son of man, when he cometh to take

possession

possession of his kingdom"—"And the vision of the evening and morning is true. Wherefore shut thou up the vision, for *it shall be for many days.*"—Surely this repetition confirms the opinion that these predictions concern the *latter times.*

Fourth Vision.—"*The* KING" *of the West.*

IN the following vision the angel first declares, "Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall *thy people* in the *latter days;* for *yet the vision is for many days*[b]."—Daniel had been previously informed of the precise time when the Messiah was to appear, and when "he should be cut off, though not for himself;" and also, of the subsequent destruction of the city and the sanctuary, and "of the desolations determined *unto the end of the war*, even unto the consummation, and that determined shall be poured out upon the desolate," or as it is in

[b] Daniel x. 14.

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the margin of the English Bible, "upon the *desolator*."

I shall begin the observations I presume to offer, with the passage which is considered as relating both to Antiochus and to the Romans, who had just subdued Grecia, when

[c] My plan confines me to that part of this wonderful Prophecy, which appears to relate to Antichrist—or "*the war* between the Dragon and the Lamb," (see Rev. xii.) but I must beg the Reader to peruse the sixteenth of Bishop Newton's Dissertations, to see "how particular and circumstantial it is concerning the kingdoms of Egypt and Syria, from the death of Alexander to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. There is not so complete and regular a series of their kings, there is not so concise and comprehensive an account of their affairs, to be found in any author of those times. The Prophecy is really more perfect than any history. No one historian hath related so many circumstances, and in such exact order of time, as the Prophet hath foretold them: so that it was necessary to have recourse to several authors, Greek and Roman, Jewish, and Christian, and to collect here something from one, and to collect there something from another, for the better explaining and illustrating the great variety of particulars contained in his Prophecy.—The exactness of this Prophecy was so convincing, that Porphyry could not pretend to deny it, and therefore asserted that it could not possibly have been written before, but it must have been written in, or soon after the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.—Others after him have asserted the same things not only *without* proof, but *contrary* to all the proofs which can be had in cases of this nature." Bishop Newton, Diss. 16.

the y

they commanded Antiochus to return home.— "For the ships of Chittim[d] shall come against him, therefore he shall be grieved and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do: he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant. And arms shall stand on his part," or as it may be more clearly rendered, "And after him arms (that is, the Romans) shall stand up"—Wintle renders it, "But mighty powers shall stand up *from these*," that is, from the *descendants of Chittim*—"and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate;" to which passage our Saviour refers in his prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem[f], and therefore *fixes* its *reference to that event*.—History fully authorizes us to apply a part of what follows to the times of Antiochus Epiphanes and the Maccabees, in its primary sense; and the history of the church is then continued from

[d] The coast of *Chittim* and the land of Chittim is a general name for Greece, Italy, and the countries and islands of the Mediterranean—The countries peopled by *Cittim*, the son of Javan, the son of Japhet.—See Bishop Newton's fifth Dissertation; Bochart, Vitringa, and Wintle.

[e] Daniel xi. 30, 31. [f] See vol. i. c. 10.

the destruction of Jerusalem to the general resurrection. — "And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt through flatteries; but the people that do know their God, shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that understand among the people (by which is to be understood the Christians) shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days. Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white — even to the time of the end; because it is yet for a time appointed[5]." We have here predictions of the persecutions to which the Christians were subjected, with little interruption, for the first 300 years, and of the help afforded them when fallen to the lowest state of depression, by the establishment of Christianity in the Roman Empire. This is called, *little help*, because the church was raised only to that degree of prosperity suited to a state of trial, and continued but a short time to enjoy it; for it was soon corrupted by those who "clave to it by flatteries," or worldly motives.

[5] Daniel xi. 32, 33, &c.

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There was however a remnant left amidst this general apostasy; and many churches were again established "by them of understanding," to whom *the little help* was also given at the time of the Reformation; but being still "the appointed time" of indignation—of the reign of Antichrist, and of warfare to the church—they were left to struggle with their various enemies; and it is expressly declared, "that *some* of them should fall—not so much for *punishment* as for *purification*—for *a time only*, and *not for ever*. And we may farther observe, that this Prophecy seems to intimate that *some* of these churches should *stedfastly resist* these attacks, and *be enabled* "to stand before the Son of man," at his coming to destroy the works of Satan, and to establish his church in everlasting perfection, glory, and security. —Thus have we a summary view of the history of the Christian church "till the time of the end" of that tribulation which is so frequently the subject of Prophecy. But the angel reverts to what appears to be the principal object of his mission—to forewarn the church of the *nature* and *conquests* of its enemies—to guard it against the *varied* efforts of its antagonist—to afford a solid ground for *faith* and *hope* to rest upon, when assail-

ed by most furious storms of the conflicting elements, deceit, and rage, superstition and indifference, ignorance and *philosophism*, which satanic art should be allowed to raise *within the period* allotted for the reign of Antichrist.

It was observed, that "as the little horn" in the former vision was said to spring from Grecia, we should naturally look to the *eastern* part of the world for the scene of its action. Similar reasons will now lead us to suppose that *the king* now mentioned in this vision, was to arise and display his power in the *west*. For the angel has brought down the history to the taking of Jerusalem by the *Romans*; and we know the *Roman Empire* was at that time the *reigning power*. "The *king*" therefore thus mentioned, without any epithet or distinguishing appellation, we must conclude to be a *Roman Power*. "And [h] the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall

[h] Daniel xi. 36, &c.

be

be done. Neither ſhall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the deſire of women, nor regard any god: for he ſhall magnify himſelf above all. But in his eſtate ſhall he honour the God of forces; and a God whom his fathers knew not ſhall he honour with gold, and ſilver, and with precious ſtones, and pleaſant things. Thus ſhall he do in the moſt ſtrong holds with a ſtrange God, whom he ſhall acknowledge and increaſe with glory: and he ſhall cauſe them to rule over many, and ſhall divide the land for gain. And at the time of the end ſhall the king of the ſouth puſh at him: and the king of the north ſhall come againſt him like a whirlwind, with chariots and with horſemen, and with many ſhips; and he ſhall enter into the countries, and ſhall overflow and paſs over. He ſhall enter alſo into the glorious land, and many countries ſhall be overthrown: but theſe ſhall eſcape out of his hand, even Edom and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He ſhall ſtretch forth his hand alſo upon the countries; and the land of Egypt ſhall not eſcape. But he ſhall have power over the treaſures of gold and of ſilver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians ſhall be at his steps. But tidings out of the

east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palaces between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him."

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." The application of this Prophecy to the *Papal* Antichrist — to the conquests of the Saracen king of the south, and the Turkish king of the north, over the holy land and many other countries — the escape of Arabia, and the subjection of Egypt and Barbary have been clearly, I had almost said *indisputably*, established by many

learned Commentators. But how far this Prophecy may be considered as a *double type* of Antichrist, and how much may be supposed to be *yet future*, are questions that can only be decided by a careful comparison with *other* Prophecies respecting *the same period*, and by the course of events which *time* shall bring to light. Mr. Wintle's translation gives a more clear view of what I consider as the *primary* object of this Prophecy, than the common one; I shall therefore beg leave to state it, with a few observations connected with the leading ideas of this chapter.

"For *still*, for *an appointed time*, a (or *the*) king shall even act according to his will, and shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and gainst the God of gods shall he speak marvellously, and shall prosper until the completion of the indgnation; for the decision is made."

This "king" is constantly allowed to mean Antichrist, who shall possess himself of the *Roman* power of which the angel has been speaking, and assume despotic authority both in *civil and religious* matters, and shall occasionally exalt himself *above all laws human*

and divine. Yet it ſhall proſper *till the indignation ſhall be completed;* that is, probably till the days of vengeance againſt the Jews ſhall be accompliſhed[i], "and the fulneſs of the Gentiles ſhall be come in;" for *till then* "the witneſſes are to prophefy in ſackcloth;" or the church is to remain in a ſtate of ſuffering and trial.—"Alſo to the gods of his fathers ſhall he not attend." This power, though not a faithful worſhipper of the true God, ſhall pay no attention to the polytheiſm of his Roman anceſtors—he ſhall not attend either to the eſtabliſhed Chriſtian religion, but ſhall corrupt it with his own vitiated mixtures;—"nor to the deſire of women, nor to any god ſhall he attend, but ſhall magnify himſelf above all." "The deſire of women" is interpreted by Mr. Mede and Biſhop Newton, as relating to the conjugal ſtate, or the deſire or affection for wives; and ſeems to be placed in this deſcription of Antichriſt, not merely as a ſtriking feature of Monkiſh and Papal inſtitutions, but to *diſtinguiſh* this power from the Mahometan horn deſcribed in the former viſion.—A *diſregard* to the holy inſtitution of marriage is indeed ſtrikingly applicable to both Popery

[i] Wintle and Mede.

and

and Infidelity — but not to Mahometaniſm, where it is held in high eſtimation, according to antient cuſtoms and eaſtern manners— "Yet near to God in his ſtead ſhall he honour Mahuzzim [or God's protectors] even *near the God whom his* FATHERS [the antient Romans] knew not, ſhall he do honour, with gold and with ſilver, and with precious ſtones, and with the moſt deſirable things. And he ſhall provide *for fortreſſes of Mahuzzim, together with God, whom he ſhall certainly honour*, and cauſe *them* to have dominion over many; for the land will he diſtribute at a price[k]. But *at the time of the end*, a king of the ſouth ſhall puſh at him; alſo a king of the north ſhall tempeſtuouſly ruſh upon him with chariots and with horſemen, and with a large fleet, and ſhall enter into the countries, and ſhall overflow and paſs through. *He* ſhall enter alſo into the land of glory, and though many ſhall be ruined, there ſhall eſcape out of his hand Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the Ammonites. Yet when he ſhall extend his power over the countries, the land of Egypt

[k] For the application of this moſt accurate deſcription of the Papal power of Antichriſt, I refer the Reader to the following Chapter upon that ſubject.

ſhall not eſcape; but he ſhall have dominion over the treaſures of gold and of ſilver, and over all the deſirable things of Egypt; and the Libyans and Ethiopians ſhall be in his ſteps. But rumours ſhall diſturb him from the eaſt, and from the north; therefore he ſhall go forth in great fury to deſtroy and devote to utter perdition many. And he ſhall fix the tents of his pavilion between the ſeas in the mountain of the glory of holineſs; yet, he ſhall come to his end, and no one ſhall help him. Moreover at that time ſhall riſe up Michael, the great prince that ſtandeth up for the children of thy people; then ſhall there be a time of trouble, ſuch as never was ſince the exiſtence of a nation until this time; and in this time ſhall *the people* eſcape[1], every one that is found written in the book. Then multitudes that ſleep in the duſt of the ground ſhall awake, ſome to life everlaſting, and others to reproaches, to confuſion ever-

[1] By this paſſage I apprehend is meant, not only the return of the Jews from their diſperſion, but the "eſcape" of the holy people of God, not only Jews, but Gentile Chriſtians; according to many paſſages in Scripture relative to that time, which indicate that at this time of *peculiar judgment*, the good ſhall be *diſtinguiſhed* from the wicked. See our Lord's predictions and revelations, &c.

lasting. And those that have wisely instructed shall shine like the splendor of the firmament, and those that have made many righteous, like the stars for ever and ever. But thou, Daniel, close the words, and seal up the book, until the time of the end: when many shall have searched diligently, and knowledge shall be increased."

The accomplishment which the former part of this Prophecy has received in the Papal power, and in the conquest of the Mahometan power, is confessedly accurate—but much remains to be fulfilled; and many reasons might be produced to authorize the conjecture, that even *that part* of the Prophecy which has been so decidedly fulfilled will hereafter receive a more *full* and perfect accomplishment.—The change is so abrupt, that it is *yet* difficult to decide, whether by "He shall enter also into the land of glory," be meant "the king of the north" [the Turks in particular], or "the king" *first* mentioned, that is, *the power of Antichrist*, which is *the principal subject of the Prophecy in another form*[m].—Of one thing however we are certain,

[m] Dr. Doddridge remarks, in his note on our Lord's Prophecy, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down, till the

tain, that the "end" of *this king*, whether Mahometan, or Infidel, is to be exactly similar to the end of the *Grecian* little horn, and the horn of the *fourth* beast in the former visions; "yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." We may likewise presume, that the end of this king shall take place at the *same time* with that of these little horns, and with the recal of the Jews from their dispersion, which is mentioned according to the angel's promise to inform Daniel "what should befal his people *in the latter days*."

The conjecture therefore that these are all branches of the SAME power, that must together *die*, when their root is destroyed, is thus far confirmed,

time of the Gentiles be fulfilled," that "the time of the Gentiles," means "the time when they shall be *visited*, and *punished*," and this accords with the time of the reign of Antichrist. He farther observes, "Thus the Turks, *or some other* Antichristian Power, may continue possessed of the Holy Land till the restoration of the Jews: for we can hardly suppose their way to it should then be opened by the conquest of a *Christian* power."

The

The INFIDEL POWER *a third Branch or Form of Antichrist shewn to be predicted by Daniel.*

I shall now take leave to suppose that I have shewn the Mahometan as well as the Papal Antichrist to be clearly depicted in the Prophecies of Daniel.—It remains to be examined whether the Infidel Antichrist was not as accurately drawn in the picture, though unobserved till the strong reflected light thrown upon it by recent events, brought out the lines. The objects first in chronological order were first presented to our view. And that this sketch of the Infidel power, which we shall find was afterwards more minutely finished, was not *intended* to be discovered till *near the time of the end*—the time for its appearance, is, I think, evident from the injunction of the angelic messenger. "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, *even to* the time of the end [n]"—then "many shall run to and fro; and *knowledge shall increase*."—And when Daniel "heard" the declaration of the angel concerning "the *time* of the end

[n] Daniel xii. 4.

of

of these wonders, but understood not," and asked for an explanation, he was answered, "Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and *sealed till the time of the end.* Many shall [*then*] be purified and made white and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand"—or as Wintle renders this passage, "But though none of the wicked *will attend*, those of understanding *shall attend.*" How far the present circumstances of the world indicate the arrival of this promised period of increasing knowledge of the Prophetic writings, it well becomes each in his generation to consider.

The Reader will recollect, that when we considered the vision of the beasts, and the little horn which arose *among* or *after* the ten horns, it was observed that this vision probably contained a description of *the whole of Antichrist*[a]. The distinct pictures which we have since seen of the Mahometan and Papal forms of this power, appear to confirm this idea. And when we reflect upon the superior solemnity of the conclusion of

[a] See p. 328, and 335.

this

this first vision, it will, I think, seem probable, that in this general description, the *last* of the forms it was to assume would be the *most* particularly noticed, if any were particularized above the rest. We shall find, I think, upon examination, that this was really the case[p]. It has already been stated, that these ten kingdoms do *not necessarily* appear to belong to the *western* division of the empire; and it seems clear that *this broken form* is to remain till the judgment is set." We are therefore at liberty to suppose, that *this* little horn, which is Antichrist, represents both the Mahometan power in the *East*, and the Papal power in the *West*; which were in fact raised up nearly together: and if the description of this horn be found fairly applicable to *another* power which was to arise *afterwards within the bounds of the antient Roman Empire* (as we gather from the consi-

[p] Whether the ten horns of the beast are *literally* ten kingdoms, or whether the number ten signifies only that the Roman Empire was to be broken into *many* parts, and that during the existence of these *numerous* kingdoms the little horn should arise, is a question not easy to decide. The supposition of the indefinite number would remove a difficulty generally felt by all Expositors; but, as Archbishop Secker observes, "it doth not appear that any of the numbers in Daniel mean uncertainty;" and therefore it must be admitted with caution.

deration

deration of *other Prophecies*), we may as naturally conclude that it was designed to represent *that power also*. If this be granted, and surely it can hardly be denied, the different opinions of Commentators respecting this little horn, so far from being discordant, will be found in unison; and more loudly sound the harmony of Prophetic truth.

Those who see the Mahometan power in "the little horn," which arose from the fourth beast, generally suppose Egypt, Asia, and Greece, to be "the three horns plucked up by the roots before it." Bishop Newton [q], in his application of this Prophecy to the Papal power, considers them to be the exarchate of Ravenna, the kingdom of Lombardy, and the state of Rome; and observes [r], that "the Pope hath in a manner pointed himself out for the person described, by wearing the triple crown."—We can at present form no opinion concerning the *three* horns which are to be *eradicated* by the Infidel power; whether absolutely *kingdoms* be meant, or whether *independent states* may be considered as a sufficient explanation—but pos-

[q] Note, Diss. 14.
[r] Newton, vol. i. p. 485.

terity

terity may be enabled to decide upon this ſubject perhaps more clearly than the partial fulfilment of this Prophecy has hitherto enabled us to do, reſpecting the conqueſts of the Mahometan and Papal powers.

In order to ſhew that the application of this Prophecy to the Infidel power of Antichriſt, ſo far from doing any violence to *received interpretation*, does in fact more *fully* exemplify, more *accurately* accord with it; in all ſuch circumſtances as the ſhort time that has elapſed ſince its developement will allow us to diſcern, I ſhall ſhortly ſtate Biſhop Newton's explanation, though he refers the deſcription to the Papal power[s].—"And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth ſpeaking great things"—"The eyes of a man denote *his cunning and foreſight*, his looking out and watching all opportunities to promote his own intereſt"—the perſpicacity and cunning of this power, who is *penetrating in myſterious craft*[t].—"He had a mouth ſpeaking very great things"—"thundering out his *bulls* and *anathemas*—*excommunicating princes, and abſolving ſubjects from their obedience.*"

[s] Newton, vol. i. p. 487. [t] Wintle, &c.

—"His

—" His look was more stout than his fellows"—" *his assumed superiority* over his fellow Bishops, and Kings, and Emperors"—" And he shall speak great words *against* the most High" (or, as Symmachus renders it, " *as* the most High," which is as appropriate to the Papacy, as *against* is to Infidelity)—" *setting up himself above all laws divine and human;* arrogating to himself godlike attributes, and titles of holiness and infallibility, *exacting obedience to his ordinances and decrees*, in preference to, and in *open violation of reason, and Scripture, insulting men, and blaspheming God.*"—" And he shall wear out the saints [u] of the most High"—" *by wars*

[u] It has been objected by some *zealous Protestants*, that the term *saints* cannot be properly applied to *Roman Catholics*, and therefore that the *persecution* of the *priests* by *the infidel power* of France cannot be deemed any fulfilment of this prophecy. But surely the *piety* and exemplary conduct of many *professors* of the Romish religion, may certainly entitle them, in the opinion of *all* Christians, to the name of *saints*, or *holy men*. We should ever distinguish the *personal* excellence of the professors, from the *corrupt and antichristian doctrines of the Church of Rome:* just as we must distinguish the profligacy of many of its members, from the *purity* of the *doctrines* of the Church of England; and no one will deny that the French Revolution has separated the Wheat from the Chaff in a very remarkable manner. The *persecution of all religious principles* is, however, a sufficient mark of the antichristian power in the *Image* set up in France. Fourth edition.

and

and massacres and inquisitions; persecuting and destroying the faithful servants of Jesus, and the true worshippers of God, who protest against his innovations, and refuse to comply with the idolatry practised in the Church of Rome"—*And he shall think to change times and laws*—"appointing fasts and feasts, canonizing saints, granting pardons for sins, instituting *new* modes of worship, imposing *new* articles of faith, enjoining *new* rules of practice, and *reversing at pleasure the laws both of God and man.*"

And now let the unbiassed Reader judge, whether this description of the little horn of the fourth beast be not *more strikingly applicable* to the *Infidel power*, which we have seen arise in France, than even to the Papacy of Rome[x]. —If St. Paul's description of "the Man of Sin" be found equally applicable (and that it is, has been satisfactorily shewn by Mr. Jones[y])—if the second beast in the Revelation, which has hitherto baffled enquiry, appears from examination to be the *exact*, and

[x] This subject will be more fully examined in the Chapter upon Infidelity.

[y] In two Sermons printed in 1794, and 1795, at the desire of numbers who were struck with the truth of the application.

as

as it were the *appropriate* type of this same recently-arisen Power—a Power which the antient Prophets and the Apostles of our Lord repeatedly declare was to arise "in the LATTER TIME *of the time appointed for indignation*[z]"—*in the latter times*, in the *last days*—we cannot surely require more evidence of the justness of the application.—We shall be no longer "shaken in mind" at the progress of such amazing wickedness, when we see that it is fulfilling the "sure word of Prophecy," and understand what is to be the end thereof."

The General Opinion concerning the SECOND BEAST *in the Revelations, considered to be erroneous.*

It must be confessed, that the numerous interpretations concerning the second beast mentioned in the Revelations of St. John, are neither compatible with each other, nor satis-

[z] Even if we date the *beginning* of these days of vengeance from the destruction of Jerusalem, the Papal and Mahometan powers, which arose together about the year 600, or 750, cannot be considered as *completely* fulfilling this Prophetic intimation.

factory

factory in their application. — And this acknowledgment very considerably strengthens the opinion, that this hieroglyphic creature delineates a *Power* as distinct from Popery, as Popery is from Mahometanism, but which *Power* had not a *visible* existence when most of these interpretations were written. According to the mode of explanation most commonly adopted, there appears *a degree of repetition* in the Prophecy, and a description of the *same thing* in different words, and in different ways, which we do not seem authorized to conclude is really the truth. For it should be observed, that to describe the *same appearance* of a power in various ways, is totally different from describing the *same power* as *appearing* under *different forms* at *different periods of time*. "The Pope and his Clergy," for example, is surely *only* the *Papal Power fixed at Rome*[a]. "The Greek Church," which was once Sir Isaac Newton's idea, cannot be a right application, because it separated from Rome *before* that city became the seat of the Papal Empire. The *first* beast is considered by Daubuz, as denoting the Antichristian *civil* powers which were to be within the Roman Empire, during the second period

[a] See Mede, Whiston, Newton, Waple, &c.

of the church; and the *second* beast as denoting the Antichristian *ecclesiastical* power during the same space of time; and therefore he supposes the two "two-horns" to be the lines of the Bishops of Rome and of Constantinople.—Lowman considers the second beast to be "the Holy Roman Empire" established in Germany.—Vitringa regards it as the Inquisition, and the Dominican and Franciscan orders of Monks.—Bishop Newton, Whiston, Pyle, Bishop Hurd, and Dr. S. Clarke, consider the first as the "secular beast," or the *Civil power* of the Papal Empire of Rome, acting not only at Rome, but by its ten horns, or ten kingdoms, which were formed after the first Empire was broken by the northern nations; and they suppose the *second* beast to be the *Ecclesiastical* power of Rome.

There are indeed many objections to these interpretations, besides *sameness* in the beasts, and *repetition* of representation.—The *first* beast of the Revelations, and the little horn of Daniel, are generally allowed to mean the *same power*, whatever that power may be.—Now if *only* the *civil* power be designated, in what was the Antichristian horn *divers* from the other ten horns? Four horns, or heads, arose

arose out of the *Grecian* kingdom, two of which soon subjected the two others.—There is nothing therefore remarkable in the *coming up* of the little horn; it is either the *kind* of horn that is extraordinary, or the *circumstances under which it arises*. We are told[b], "All the world wondered after the" (*first* or, what is termed by Newton and other Commentators, the *secular*) "beast."—The world was too much accustomed to Asiatic and Roman despots to *wonder* at *civil tyranny*. It surely must have been its monstrous coalition with episcopacy—its being "seated in the temple of God, shewing himself as God, and speaking great things and blasphemies"—*professing the religion of the Lamb*, and yet *persecuting* his faithful servants, which excited so much astonishment.—"The mouth that was given unto this beast, speaking blasphemies, and the power to make war with all the saints and to overcome them," designates the persecuting spirit and power of *Ecclesiastical Rome* in this first general description; but when the beast appears again[c], with the woman (or "the great city," as this symbol is explained by the angel) sitting upon it, *these* marks of the

[b] Rev. xiii. [c] Rev. xvii.

beast are omitted, and the *woman* is described as "arrayed in purple, and drunken with the blood of the saints and martyrs[d]."—And it cannot, I think, be easily supposed, that the woman and the second beast represent *the same power*, which by implication they must do according to these interpretations of its meaning.—We see then the *union* of the civil and the ecclesiastical power of the Church of Rome, both in the little horn of Daniel[e], and in the first beast of the Revelations. We may observe too, that the *Dragon*, the emblem of *Pagan* Rome, "gave his power to *this* beast," which I conceive to represent the junction of *idolatry* with *civil* and *religious tyranny*, and this must indeed seem *wonderful* in a professedly Christian Church.

Another reason for believing the second beast in the Revelations a Power *distinct* from the first, is, that there are many passages in

[d] The *woman* or the *great city* of Rome is *seated upon* or *supported by* the *Beast* or *ecclesiastical tyranny*. It was the antichristian claim of the *Bishop of Rome to universal supremacy in the church*, which *restored* to the *city of Rome* the *secular power*, which had been taken away from it, by *Odoacer*, and thus it was that *civil* and *ecclesiastical* tyranny were *united* in *papal Rome*. Fifth Edition.

[e] And particularly in the *Roman* "king."

the

the Apostle's description of "the perilous times in *the last days*," which can hardly be applied to the *Papal* or the *Mahometan* Antichrist, and certainly not to *Civil tyranny* unconnected with religion.

It is remarkable, that in the first Epistle to Timothy, St. Paul's prediction relative to "the *latter times*," applies in every particular, to the *Papal* Antichrist — And that in the *second* Epistle he says, "This know *also*, that *in the last days*, perilous times shall come, for men shall be[f], &c." In the application of these words to *a later period of time*, we are authorized by the opinion of a most profound and sagacious interpreter of Scripture. It is observed by Joseph Mede[g], "that the last times, simply and in general, are the times of Christianity: the last times in *special* and *comparatively*, or the latter times of the last times, are the times of the apostacy under Antichrist."—And we have, I think, clearly seen that "the *latter end* of the days of vengeance," which are "the times of the apostacy under Antichrist," are occasionally

[f] See 2 Tim. iii, and the four first verses of the fourth chapter, quoted page 292.

[g] Mede's Works, p. 804.

expressly distinguished. The second and third chapters of the second of Peter, and the Epistle of St. Jude[h], do certainly belong as little to the Papal power of Antichrist.— But do we know of no Power in *these present days*, to which this description will most accurately apply? Is it possible to draw a more exact picture of APOSTATE INFIDELITY, united with DEMOCRATIC TYRANNY? And if, upon examination, we find any corresponding marks of this dreadful power in the second beast of the Revelations, having already seen them in the prophecy of Daniel, will not this agreement add so much weight to the separate testimony of each, as altogether to be nearly demonstrative evidence to the truth of the opinion and the justness of the application?

But though, from the various circumstances already stated, we cannot be surprised that most of the learned Commentators have failed in their attempts to explain a Prophecy respecting events which to them were veiled by futurity; we have the authority of *some*, who, either unfettered by similar prejudices, or endowed with superior sagacity, formed

[h] See p. 303—309.

con-

conjectures concerning the second beast, which at once excite our admiration, and confirm the opinion which is now offered to the consideration of the publick.—The Bishop of Meaux, and the learned Grotius, approached more nearly to the truth than has been usually imagined, when they supposed the second beast to denote PHILOSOPHY, "falsely so called."—Dr. Hartley, in the conclusion of his Observations on Man, considers "INFIDELITY as the Beast."—It is also his opinion, that when the world should be arrived at a certain degree of *depravity*, it will then be prepared for "*the times of desolation*."—Sir Isaac Newton, and Dr. Clarke, interpreted "the reign of the Beast" to be "THE OPEN AVOWAL OF INFIDELITY."—They farther conjectured, that "the state of Religion in *France*, and the manners of the age, combined with the Divine Oracles to announce the *approaching reign of the Beast*"—And they considered it as probable, that the Ecclesiastical Constitution of *France* would soon be subverted, and that the standard of Infidelity would be first set up *there*[1]." And they

[1] See the conclusion of Hartley's Observations on Man, published by G. Nicol—Whiston's Life, and Clarke's Works. The conjecture formed by Mr. Fleming concerning

they supposed Rev. xi. 7. to relate to this important æra in the Christian world. "And when they[k] [the two witnesses] shall have finished their testimony, [or shall be *finishing*, or be *about to finish*, their testimony—and they were to prophesy the same number of years as the first beast, that is, 1260] the beast that ascendeth [that is, *ascendeth*, or *is ascending* AT THE TIME that the witnesses are *finishing* their testimony] out of the bottomless pit, shall make war against them, and

cerning the destruction of the *French Monarchy* under the fourth vial, before, or about the year 1794, printed nearly a hundred years ago, remarkably coincides with this conclusion—with recent facts—and with the general idea of the Prophetic writings contained in this chapter. Lowman, Bishop Newton, and several others have looked to *France* as the scene of some great change, or some dreadful event that would particularly affect the church of God.

[k] Whether Fleming's opinion respecting "the witnesses" be equally well founded with his conjecture relative to France, must remain a question. He supposes "the witnesses were slain" immediately before the Reformation, and "ascended up to the heaven of rest and security when the Protestant Churches were established." This opinion, with which Bishop Newton and many other learned Commentators concur, is very consolatory at this period of general attack; but I confess it appears to me to be attended with too many difficulties to be adopted with confidence.

shall

shall overcome and kill them." —It will appear evident that the beast thus described is the same with the second beast of the thirteenth chapter of Revelations, which "ascendeth out of the *earth*," when we consider the numerous passages in Scripture, which indicate that "the bottomless pit" does *not* mean *the same as the sea*. And this point will be found to throw considerable light upon the subject as we proceed in our endeavours to investigate it.

The Infidel Power *of Antichrist shewn to be predicted also in the Revelation.*

It is considered as an established point, that the beast with seven heads and ten horns, and the woman upon whose forehead was written, "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth[1]," denote the Papal Antichrist, whose seat is Rome, and that the duration of this Anti-

[1] Rev. xvii. 5.

christian

christian Power was to be 1260 years.—The difficulty has been to understand the meaning of "the beast which comes up out of the *earth*[m]—had two horns like a lamb, and spake as a dragon, exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed,"—"deceiveth many by means of miracles [*wonders*] which he had power to do in the sight of the beast, saying to them that dwell in the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword and did live—and had power to give life unto the image of the beast; that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast, should be killed; and he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads, and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast. For it is the number of a man;

[m] Rev. xiii. 11, &c.

and

and his number is six hundred threescore and six[a]."

The first beast arose out of the *sea*, that is, in the prophetical language, *out of*, or *during*, violent commotions, wars and tumults, or times of violence and troubles.—The second beast arises out of the *earth*, that is, according to general interpretation, exactly the reverse of the first description:—*rising gradually* in times of calm and quiet, like a plant out of the earth, which establishes itself imperceptibly by a thousand roots, before it shews its head, and *silently* attains its destined height and strength.

This beast has "two horns like a lamb." Horns are the acknowledged symbols of strength or power—the first beast has ten horns, which are explained by the angel to

[a] Various have been the conjectures concerning this mystical number—*Vicarius Filii Dei*, a title which the Popes have assumed to themselves, *and have thus made it the number of a man*, and caused to be inscribed over the door of the Vatican, exactly makes 666, when decyphered according to the numeral signification of its constitutent letters. *Lateinos* (the word mentioned by Irenæus), *Romiith*, and *Ludovicus*, each contains the same number. See Pyle on the Revelations, p. 103, and Fleming, p. 140.

be

be ten kingdoms which gave their power to the beast, and thus increased his *civil* power. But the horns of the second beast are of a *peculiar kind*, they are "like a lamb, or the lamb," which symbol throughout the Revelations represents Christ—It is this which has especially led to the opinion that the second beast is the *Ecclesiastical* power of Rome, because these horns must denote *something* which *seems* to be like Christianity — they are not said *to be* the horns of a lamb, but *like*, or *resembling*, the horns of a lamb.

"He speaks (however) *as*" in the same manner with "*a dragon*, or *the dragon*." As words proceed from the heart, or soul, or mind, which are truly the man, the *real nature* of this personage is thus declared in very plain terms, and so are the *arts* by which he shall obtain and support his power.

It appears then, that this second beast is *not* to wear the form of civil tyranny, but is to derive his power or strength from its *semblance* to the religion of Christ, or the Lamb; by which it will deceive many (who are elsewhere said to be under the influence of "strong delusion, and to believe a lie"),

and

and will *then* gain possession of public opinion; though this "seducing form of godliness" breathes in reality "the doctrine of devils."—It is usually understood that this second beast is called[o] "the false *Prophet*," or *Teacher*; which was taken with the (first) beast;—and[p] "the beast that ariseth out of the bottomless pit" (or "hell, in which the dragon is afterwards bound") "and that maketh war against the witnesses, overcometh and killeth them." This description agrees perfectly with that of his rising out of the *earth*, but (unless the pit and the sea mean the same, which I think they cannot mean) *not* with that of the beast which riseth out of the sea.—It agrees also with the power of the second beast to *give* power to the *image* of the first beast, "to *cause* that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed."—This second beast did *not appear* to make the image of the first beast himself, but *he caused them that dwell in the earth* to make it: having first *deceived* them into obedience to his will by means of the miracles or *wonders*, which he had power to do in the sight of the first beast; that is, before the expiration of the 1260 years, or

[o] Rev. xix. 20. [p] Rev. xi. 7.

within

within his kingdom.—And so absolute and universal was his sway, that "small and great, rich and poor, bond and free," *were deprived of all commerce with men, and civil privileges of life, if they did not in some way or other make profession of obedience to his constitutions and decrees*[q], and adopt some sign, or wear some mark denoting their enrolment into the service of the beast and his image, by which they are themselves formed into an *association or fraternity*.—And all men are considered and "*treated as worthy of death, who refuse an entire submission, in any particular, to these decrees*[r]." The second beast, and the image *to which he gives life*, are then PERSECUTING powers. This second beast "exercisеth *all* the power of the first beast," that is, his tyranny extends over the *minds* as well as the *bodies* of men—their *spiritual* as well as their *temporal* interests—their *religious* as well as their *civil* liberties—he was "to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and to have power over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations."

[q] Lowman, p. 190, but applied by him to the Pope.

[r] Lowman, p. 190.

Daubuz

Daubuz observes, that "the powers constituting the first beast, or Papal Rome, carried on the *same design* against true religion, though in another form, as the *dragon* did when the empire was Pagan. "It was the *dragon* who gave power to the first beast who spake great things and blasphemies; and all that dwell on the earth worshipped the dragon and the beast, except those whose names are written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." And the second beast has also the power of the *dragon*, whose *spirit dictates his words*, or doctrines and commands—but this connexion, the *real origin* of his power, is now more concealed from the world, who are not so much *subdued*, as *deceived* into subjection; for it is to be remarked, that this second beast has no marks whatever of civil power.—The counterfeit likeness to the Lamb seduces them at first to believe that his power is from heaven, "because of the wonders that he doth in their sight," to expect from him universal happiness, and by degrees to follow his orders *implicitly*, however contradictory to his pretensions to *true morality*, *truth*, and *genuine religion* (which indeed must ever *include* moral virtue) till they are led "to make an image by his direction," which shall punish their credu-

credulity and wickedness by the most cruel and excessive tyranny, while it is held up to them as the idol of their *affections*, or their *worship*; and to which, by a strange infatuation, they *continue* to yield a willing obedience, notwithstanding the miseries it creates. "They blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues; and repented not, to give him glory*."

This image is made to *resemble* the *first* beast, but it is wholly unconnected with it, except as they both belong to Antichrist.—It is the *second* which *gives it life*, and *directs its operations*.—It is called the *image* of the first beast—which signifies the same union of tyranny, blasphemy, and idolatry, *openly exerted*; which, it is to be observed, the second beast does not *avow*, or *appear* to exert or maintain, but *secretly produces and upholds* in the image which he caused to be made. The form of the first beast, it should be remarked, was made up of the four beasts that represented to Daniel the four great empires of the earth; but there is some change in the order in which they are mentioned.—It is not *impossible* but this order may in future be

* Rev. xvi. 9.

found

found applicable to the *course of its conquests* over the kingdoms they originally represented; for the second beast is to have power over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations, "by *means of the image* made like the first." We may then suppose that the *Image* has [illegible] seven

[illegible]

[t] Since this work was first published, I have seen the following remarks in the Gentleman's Magazine for June 1799; which, though not written with any view to the system adopted in these Volumes, do in fact contribute towards its elucidation, by shewing the *likeness* of the *Image* to the *first* Beast. "The seven Heads appear to mean the confederated Republics——1. the French Republic; 2. the Batavian; 3. the Cisalpine; 4. the Ligurian; 5. the Roman; 6. the Helvetic; 7. the Piedmontese. As the independence of the six last is nominally acknowledged by the first, the Confederacy may not inaptly be compared to a *Seven-headed Monster*; though the despotic influence, which France really exercises over all the others, forbids us to recognize them as separate bodies; France "having the Mouth speaking great things."

This author's application of the ten Horns to the ten Sovereigns whom France has dispossessed of a part, or of the whole of their dominions, appears to be less accurate, as indeed it is likely to be, unless we consider the reign of Infidelity as already nearly expired, or as *confined* to *France*, for the seat of its power. But the Reader will clearly perceive that I consider the reign of *Infidelity*, or the second Beast, as likely to be extended over many kingdoms; and though it has raised up the *Image* of *Democratic Tyranny*, *first* in France, Time alone can determine whether

ſeven heads with the name of blaſphemy, and ten horns with crowns upon them"—the ſeven heads are explained by the angel to repreſent the *Roman* Empire, and *forms of government* [u]—the ten horns with crowns, the ten kingdoms into which the empire was broken [x],—and the crowns ten kings over them which were "to receive power one hour with the beaſt," "to give their power to him for a time, but afterwards to turn againſt the ſeat of his tyranny [y]." It is like "unto a leopard," ſignifying *ſwiftneſs*, and a motley mixture of people—and in Daniel's viſion the *Grecian Empire*.—"Its feet are as the feet of a bear," cruelly ſtamping on all

whether the *ſame Image* will not ſucceſſively appear in other countries previous to the termination of the power of Antichriſt. Certain it is, that the ſyſtem, which I have preſumed to offer as an explanation of the Prophecies concerning Antichriſt, does not depend upon the continuance or the deſtruction of the power of *France*. Poſterity alone can poſitively determine reſpecting its Truth or Error.

[u] See note, p. 410.

[x] See Daniel's Prophecy, p. 341, 345.

[y] Nothing is ſaid in the Revelations of the fall of three of theſe horns—as the *little* horn appears now in its *full power*, as *the beaſt*, that period of its hiſtory muſt be ſuppoſed to be paſſed; and I confeſs there being *ſtill ten*, inclines me to ſuppoſe that ten denotes an indefinite number.

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its prey, and ſtanding in the former viſion for *Perſia*—" its mouth as the mouth of a lion"—which repreſented *Aſſyria*, or *Babylon*—itſelf the well known type of Antichriſt, becauſe of its pride, blaſphemy, and cruel treatment of the ſervants of God; and which crimes are particularly marked by the *mouth* of the lion, whoſe tremendous roar "maketh all the beaſts of the foreſt to quake." "It has a mouth ſpeaking great things and blaſphemies, and it opens its mouth in blaſphemy againſt God, to blaſpheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven."—The deadly wound of one of the heads of the firſt beaſt—the ten kings giving it their power for a time, and then making war againſt it—the conqueſt of the three kingdoms mentioned by Daniel, and the power given him by the dragon againſt the ſaints, are not properly *deſcriptive of himſelf*, but *circumſtances* of his *hiſtory*, which may or may not belong to the hiſtory of the image, but with which however the hiſtory of the image will in ſome reſpects probably be found to agree.

Here then in this IMAGE, ſet up by *the power of the* DRAGON, we find diſplayed to our view, the ſame tremendous *union* of *civil*

and *religious tyranny* which the first beast possessed, supported by the *falsehood* and *imposture* of the second beast who caused it to be made by the dupes to his artifices. The same blasphemy against God and his church, and his faithful servants—the same *despotic* rule over the earth in civil and religious affairs, *must be visible* in this image. But it does *not* necessarily follow that this persecuting power should adopt the same *mode* of persecution—proceed upon the same *principles*, or direct itself against the same persons—It does *not* necessarily follow that it should speak *the same words* of blasphemy, or that its *despotism* should wear the *same form* as that which the first beast assumed.—And indeed, I cannot but think, that when the first beast and the image are compared with attention, it will appear that a *difference* in these respects is strongly marked; and that the reign of the *Image* of the beast is yet more tremendous in its effects upon the eternal interests of mankind, and even more generally oppressive in the exertions of its civil power.—It is said of the first beast *generally*, that "all the world worshipped the dragon which gave power to the beast, and they worshipped the beast" *also*;—signifying the idolatrous spiritual power, and the temporal or secular power

united

united in the seat of Rome.—But it is said of the image *particularly*, that "as many as would not worship this image, should be killed by it," and that it should cause all persons of *every rank and condition*, which are expresly *enumerated*, either to receive a mark, acknowledging their submission or attachment, or to be deprived of their civil rights and privileges.—Now it is declared by an angel in the following chapter, that, "if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture *into the cup of his indignation*: and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints. Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus[z].

It is worthy notice that the angel who thus

[z] Rev. xiv. 9, 10, 11, 12.

denounced the wrath of God against the worshippers of the beast and his image, *followed* two others; the *first* of whom "flew in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting-Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and calling upon them to fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment was come."—And the *second* of whom declared "the fall of Babylon." Now the first of these angels is generally understood to represent the preaching of the Gospel, which was brought forth from its concealment at the time of *the Reformation*; and which certainly did produce the *fall*, or *decline* of the power of Babylon; which is proclaimed by the second angel.—And as it is according to the merciful dispensations of God's Providence to give his servants *warning* of a near, and imminent danger, it may be supposed that the *third* angel precedes the time of the *greatest* danger, and most severe trial; and thus the period of the *most tremendous* tyranny of *the* IMAGE, is fixed to be *after* the *Reformation*.—It should also be remarked, that *between* the descriptions of the two beasts we find the following call to particular attention to the *justice* of the judgments of God in making his enemies instruments in his hand to punish each other; while

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the true church, his faithful servants, sometimes afflicted, and sometimes protected, wait "with patience and faith," to see the accomplishment of the mysteries of his word—for it is in this sense I understand these words, "If any man hath an ear to hear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity; he that killeth with the sword, shall be killed by the sword. Here is the patience and faith of the saints *."

This interpretation does certainly contradict the common opinion, that the second beast is to support and advance the authority of the Church of Rome; but it must be acknowledged to harmonize with the true spirit of Christianity, and with the information which Scripture and History afford us concerning the moral government of the world; and, I think, it will be found to explain many of the difficulties attending the common application of this Prophecy.—But, it will be asked, how can this interpretation be made consistent with the twelfth verse of this Chapter? "And he exercised all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth all the earth, and them that dwell therein, to worship the first beast

* Compare Rev. xiii. 9, 10. with Dan. xii. 10.

whose deadly wound was healed."—In answer to this objection, I beg to observe, that the *two verses* which immediately follow this summons to attention, contain *the whole description* of the beast and his power in *general terms*—the succeeding verses being an account of *the manner* in which he exercisetb his power, and are in some sort, both an *amplification*, and a *detailed repetition* of the former description.—These two verses therefore (the eleventh and twelfth) extend from the beginning to the end of the reign of the second beast; and, considering a great part of this reign *as yet future*, I must also consider it as impossible to ascertain the precise meaning of a Prophecy relating to that future.—All that can be done, and indeed all that ought to be attempted, is, to offer an explanation of this passage, and a conjecture respecting it, which will be found to accord with this interpretation and with my general view of the Prophecy itself[h].

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[h] In the description of the Beast and the Image two things are observable. 1st. The second Beast "caused the earth to worship the Beast" whose deadly wounds were healed. This, it is observed by a Friend, seems to be *expressed differently* when it is said, he "caused the world to make an Image to the same Beast whose deadly wound was

The *form* and *nature* of this beast have been already considered; but the Reader will par-

was healed. 2dly, Certain *false miracles* or wonders, are moreover said to be an especial instrument in occasioning this great delusion among the inhabitants of the world. It is agreed that six of the heads of the first Beast are the six different Constitutions of Pagan Rome; and that the sixth or Imperial was in existence when St. John wrote, and afterwards *received the deadly wound* when the western empire became extinct. The 7th and 8th ("which is of the 7th") are evidently of the *same nature*, since they appear as *one upon the Beast* though distinguished from each other with *historical accuracy* in the explanation given by the Angel; and *these*, or rather *this* head is allowed to be the *papal Government* of Rome. It is remarkable that the "Mouth speaking great words of blasphemy" is not mentioned till *after* it is said "the deadly wound given to the 6th head was healed;" obviously pointing out *this*, the *last head*, to be in a *peculiar manner* antichristian; and agreeing with "the little horn" described by Daniel as "*diverse from the rest*" of the powers of the Earth.—The second Beast with horns "like a Lamb," caused the Image to be made to the first Beast, and made all them that dwell on the earth to worship the first Beast whose deadly wound was healed. Hence it follows that *this Image must be a visible form of Government*; having seven or eight *political heads, all of which are antireligious* or antichristian; but *the latter supereminently* so. This Image must be endued with the *Spirit* of the second Beast which "spake like the Dragon," and it must sedulously ape the *political Institutes* of the *first* which it *represents* in outward political Forms, and in temporal and spiritual antichristian tyranny, and thus *perhaps* it may be said to cause the world to worship the

pardon something like repetition in Mr. Lowman's words *, for the sake of his authority.

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the first Beast whose Image it is. But as *it breathes the Spirit* of the *second* Beast, and is *wholly guided* by his direction (*having no power but from him*) it seems clearly a distinct and *different* power from the Beast it represents. Now it must I think be evident to the most careless observer, that the *French Revolutionists* have upon all occasions affected to imitate the antient Romans. Their mode of carrying on war by deriving their resources from conquered provinces; their maxim " divide et impera;" their establishment of different subordinate Governments (under the name of Republics); and their *gift of a Crown* (the Crown of Etruria) as *a reward for attachment*; their Civic Feasts; their introduction of Pagan Festivals; their deification of abstract virtues; their adoption of the distinguishing Roman appellation *Citizen*; their language and even their very dress, all point out the resemblance between the Image and Original. As Rome had her Proscriptions, her Triumviri, her Consuls, so has France; and as the sixth Form of Roman Government was the imperial, supported entirely by the armies, and united with two mere phantoms, the two nominal Consuls; so is the *sixth* form of government, which now prevails in the dominions of the image, a manifest copy of the *sixth* form of its Type, the *First Beast*. Thus far then Historical Facts seem to accord in a very remarkable manner with the prophetic Vision. It remains to be seen whether Buonaparte's present Negotiation with the Pope respecting Theological Affairs will *tend towards* the production of the *7th Head* (*subsequent* to " the *deadly wound*" which it is *possible*, though plainly not necessary for

* Lowman, p. 182.

this

"I farther beheld in my visions another appearance as of a second wild beast *rising* out of

this Hypothesis, that the *sixth may* suffer) and whether the ten horns of Rome will become the ten horns of France; or, I should rather say, of the *Infidel Antichrist*, wherever *its Throne is placed*. Let us humbly wait for time to remove the present obscurity of a passage which I readily confess to be the *greatest difficulty* in the way of the Interpretation I have ventured to give, of the Image and the second Beast. When the storm that threatens the Eastern part of the antient Roman Empire shall burst, it will probably throw more light upon this subject.—It has been observed that I have not noticed "the false miracles or wonders" by which the second Beast was to delude the inhabitants of the earth, and cause them to make the Image. The various supernatural appearances exhibited in the private meetings of its early adherents, and which easily imposed upon such votaries as were tinctured with enthusiasm and superstition, may indeed be well worthy attention, however ridiculous in themselves, when their *effect* is considered; in like manner as the fictions and tricks of their monks imposed upon the credulity of the ignorant, and have ever been supposed to be a subject of Prophecy, and *a mark* of the Papal Antichrist. But such is, happily for us, the general opinion of these *mummeries in this kingdom*, that I rather chose to leave my readers to make their own comments upon this point of resemblance. As *signs*, however, of Antichristian Power, the pretended miracles of the Romish Church, the tricks of the Mahometan Dervizes, and the *magic* of the Infidel Illuminati, are sufficiently discernible, and it is surely not impossible, that in its *last* and *most formidable state*, they may become yet more conspicuous. 4th Edition.

Among

of the earth, which had two horns like the horns of a lamb, but his voice was like that of a dragon, to represent *another persecuting* government exercising its authority with a shew of meekness and charity, but carrying on the opposition of the devil, the old Serpent, to pure religion, and promoting idolatry by persecution." Mr. Lowman proceeds to paraphrase the twelfth verse thus: "And this second persecuting power had all the powers of the first, or *new revived form of Roman government*, and used its authority to spread the power of the *new Roman* government, beyond the bounds of its proper dominion, so as to oblige *the several nations* to yield obedience to the new authority revived in the city of Rome, after it had been so long deprived of all authority, and seemed to have lost all hope of recovering it."

It has also been already shewn in what manner we are to understand the second beast is said "to exercise all the powers of the

Among the many circumstances, which have strengthened the likeness of this Image raised up in France to the Roman Power, the recent distribution of the *Eagles* as the *Standards of the Armies* deserves particular notice. Fifth Edition.

first

first beast, before him[e]." And the angel's explanation of the seven heads will perhaps authorize us to suppose that the *worship*, which the second beast caused to be paid to the beast whose *deadly wound was healed*, alludes particularly to the *image* which he caused to be made *in his form of civil tyranny*.— "And there are seven kings, five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a *short space*. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition." These seven kings denote the seven forms of Roman Government — first, Kings; second, Consuls; third, Dictators; fourth, Decemvirs; fifth, Military Tribunes; sixth, Emperors; seventh, "the dominion exercised by Boniface III. and his immediate successors in the see of Rome under the title of Universal Bishops" (Letter of a Layman, p. 85.); eighth, the full developement of the Papal Antichrist in the eighth century (Letter of a Layman, p. 36, &c.). The sixth head, which was existing at the time of the Vision, received "the deadly woun[illegible]" from the hand of Odoacer in 476, when the Western Ro-

[e] See page, 377.

man

man Empire was completely destroyed. "After a reign of sixty years, the throne of the Gothic kings was filled by the Exarchs of Ravenna, the representatives in peace and war of the Emperor of the Romans. Their jurisdiction was soon reduced to the limits of a narrow province, but Narses himself (the general of the *Eastern* Emperor Justinian), the first and most powerful of the Exarchs, administered above fifteen years the entire kingdom of Italy.....Under the Exarchs of Ravenna Rome was degraded to the second rank." Gibbon, vol. iv. p. 313. "Like Thebes, or Babylon, or Carthage, the name of Rome might have been erased from the earth, if the city had not been animated by a vital principle, which again restored her to honour and dominion." Vol. viii. p. 161. The seventh head arose when Boniface III. in 607, obtained the title of "Universal Bishop," and "Head of the Catholic Church," and immediately assumed all the authority of a Supreme Head in all ecclesiastical affairs; and when idolatry was established.—This *seventh head* was to endure comparatively but a short time. And we accordingly find the *eighth head*, which was to be *of the seventh*, to be the *Universal Bishop*, or Sovereign Pontiff of Rome, *in-*

vested

vested by Pepin, King of France, with the *exarchate of Ravenna*; and soon after possessing himself with the complete *sovereignty of Rome*, and the *kingdom of Lombardy*.—Then was completed that *union* of *civil* and *ecclesiastical tyranny*, which constitutes the reign of the Antichristian Beast[d]."

The seven heads represented seven mountains (the type of Rome), and *also* seven

[d] As the sole object of this application of History to the "sure word of Prophecy" is the elucidation of divine truth, it would ill become me to contend for the certainty of any statement, whenever sufficient reasons are assigned to show that I have adopted an error. I have long thought that the interpretation given by former Expositors of the 7th and 8th Forms of the Roman Government, as alluded to in the Prophecy, was involved in considerable obscurity, and that any one who laboured with success to remove it would deserve the thanks of every inquirer into prophetic truth. To such acknowledgements is the "Layman," the author of the "Observations on the 7th Form of the Roman Government," very justly entitled. And the best proof that I can give of my high opinion of his candor, and his diligent researches into Scripture and History, and his very able application of them to the points in question, is the adoption of his ingenious suggestions in this edition of my work, instead of the interpretation given in the two former editions. And I beg leave to return my acknowledgments for the very handsome manner in which the author of that Letter, (whose name I am not allowed to mention) has permitted me to make this important correction.

of God, which hath power over these plagues, and repented not of their deeds, to give him glory," that is, did not acknowledge the justice of his judgments — perhaps even denied that they were *judgments*, attributing their sufferings to mere *secondary* causes. — It is also said, that when the fifth vial was poured out, "they blasphemed *the God of heaven*," (indicating, I presume, a still bolder kind, or higher degree of blasphemy) "and repented not of their deeds." — It cannot therefore be doubted that this period, during the violence of the fourth and fifth vials, *will be remarkable for* GENERAL *profaneness, and irreligion, and depravity of heart, and corruption of manners*, as well as for the *avenging* judgments of the Almighty; and, I confess, it appears to me little less certain, that the fourth, fifth, and sixth vials are contemporary with the *reign* of *the second beast and his image*. — Let us now examine farther, how far the *character* of that reign will agree with the *character* of these vials.

[1] It was asked by Bishop Prideaux about the year 1650, "Whether Socinianism and slighting of all antiquity be not an Introduction to Paganism and Atheism?" Introd. to Hist. p. 155. fifth Edit. 1672. Barruel and Robison will convince us of the rapid progress made by Deism within the last fifty years towards *Atheism*, and "every evil work."

I con-

I consider the second beast and his image to be connected just as the dragon and the first beast were connected.—The idolatrous spiritual power of the dragon was *visibly* exerted in ecclesiastical tyranny, which the world *saw* united with civil tyranny in the first beast.—But, a great change having taken place in the earth before the *rising* of the second beast—"the *great city* having been divided into three parts," at the Reformation (that is, the three Confessions as they are called, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Calvinistic.[k]), by which the power of the first beast was considerably weakened, and the minds of men emancipated from the chains of ignorance and superstition which had held them enslaved to the power of *Babylon*, "which *now* came up in remembrance before God"—the dragon raised up *another* beast, in a form better suited to the state of the world towards the end of the time appointed for his reign.—For this beast is not to continue *beyond*, only *until* the termination of the 1260 years appointed for the dominion of Antichrist—a great part of which term was expired before his reign commenced.

[k] See Jurieu and other Commentators.

I am aware it has been objected, that as this division of the great city is mentioned *after* the pouring out of the seventh vial, it cannot, without violating the order of time, be referred to the Reformation. But I conceive this earthquake to be a *particular judgment* upon the great city, or the power of Rome, rather than the *effect* of the seventh vial. If we compare Rev. xi. 13. we shall find the earthquake that destroyed the tenth part of the city, and 7000 men, or names of men, took place *during* the *second* woe. For by *the same hour*, is to be understood *the time of the second woe*, or, according to the eastern mode of expression, "the reign of the angel of the second woe trumpet," alluding to an opinion, common in the East, that different angels, good or bad, were permitted to exercise authority during different portions of the day, and over different regions of the earth[1]. Now the second woe began when the Turkish Empire was established in 1005, or in 1299, and is yet in power; and there is nothing in this expression to *fix* this earthquake at *any particular time* within the

[1] Our Lord, accommodating his language to this popular opinion, says, "This is *your hour*, and the power of darkness."

hour[m]. From the context however, or rather from the course of events, I suppose this earthquake is to be placed *near* the *end* of the second woe, and *after* the earthquake which *divided* the city into three parts. The earthquake mentioned Rev. xi. 19. I apprehend to be *distinct* from these, and to synchronize with the *third* woe, and the *seventh* vial, which is to have *universal* power and effect (being poured into the *air*, to denote both its extensive operation, and the utter destruction of the Antichristian power—the air being represented in Scripture, as the seat of the power and authority of Satan), and to bring sudden destruction on all the enemies of Christ, when the seventh trumpet sounds the termination of the days of vengeance. Instead of breaking the order of time, this idea places the earthquakes in regular succession, marking the most striking events in the history of the church; and it will probably be confirmed when we observe further, that when the earthquake, which

[m] In like manner "the three unclean spirits (Rev. xvi. 13.) out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false Prophet," must not be supposed to make their first appearance under the sixth vial. They might have been at work for a course of ages, but they would now unite their arts and powers, and be peculiarly active just before the great day of battle." (Rev. xix. 19.)

divides the city into three parts, is mentioned, *nothing* is said of *the great change* made from misery to happiness, by the *finishing* of the days of wrath, or the sound of the seventh trumpet—on the contrary, it is expressly declared, "*Babylon* came up in remembrance before God," as if after having been suffered to pursue her career for some time unmolested, she was now to become the particular object of punishment, and to receive the *first* "cup of the wine of the fierceness of the wrath of God." This first earthquake I therefore suppose to represent *the time of the Reformation*, and am inclined to place it as contemporary with the *first* effect of the fourth vial, poured out upon the *sun*, or ruling power, which was clearly the Pope, till "his city was divided," and then the king of France, who had given him his power and splendour, arose as he declined; but the storm which followed it, I consider as continuing to beat upon "the *men* who have the mark of the beast [or Babylon], and who worship his image," to the present hour. Many of "the *islands*," or petty states in his peculiar territory are already lost, and *the mountains* of his strength are gone—The "great hail," the usual symbol of *the irrup-*

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tion of a barbarous people[n], is now the plague of those men, who, having the mark of the beast, by an extraordinary infatuation worship the image, which is the appointed agent of its destruction (*for this "hail fall from heaven"*), and yet "blaspheme the name of God, who hath power over those plagues." The Papal sun, though suffering a very considerable diminution of its own glory, "had power given it to scorch men with fire." Of this the history of the Reformation will furnish abundant evidence. The crown of France, which had been a zealous agent in the business of massacre and intolerance—witness St. Bartholomew's day, and many other scenes of blood—became the *acknowledged* Sun[o] of the political sphere in the reign of Louis the fourteenth, when it reached the meridian of its glory. This sun did also "scorch men with fire," as the revocation of the edict of Nantz, and the thousand barbarities which mark this vaunted *Augustan* reign, will amply testify. But the dregs of the cup of retaliation were now to be poured out upon this devoted kingdom—its Regal

[n] *Thus are the French considered in the Manifesto of the King of Naples.*

[o] See Fleming, p. 53.

sun was blotted from the political heavens; and *a more tremendous Meteor* took possession of the darkened sky.—Then did the *second* earthquake, "in which the tenth part of the city," or one of the ten kingdoms "fell," convulse the earth. For I presume the *second* earthquake to represent the Revolution in France, and at *that* period (that it still under the fourth vial). I date the commencement of the reign of the *image*, though I conceive the fifth vial is now poured out, and conjecture that the sixth is near [p]. The consequences of *this* earthquake will be more generally felt, and excite more general terror than the plagues of the first, so that *at last* the *remnant* will be affrighted, and *give glory to the God of heaven*; and thus they *perhaps* will find protection from the effects of the *third* woe, and the seventh vial, which I imagine will fall with *peculiar* violence "upon them which destroy the earth [q]," by the united powers of Infidelity and Democratic tyranny, or, in other words, the second Beast, and the Image.

[p] See note, p. 401. [q] Rev. xi. 18.

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"And now may I not ask, whether we have not ourselves seen a Power gradually rise from its den, where it has long been strengthening itself, and from whence it has long sent forth the fumes of an intoxicating poison to prepare the world for its appearance, which exactly resembles this second beast? Have we not seen APOSTATE INFIDELITY, under the name of REASON, establish its dominion over the minds of men by its pretensions to a *refined* religion, a *pure* morality? Are not the doctrines of LIBERTY and EQUALITY, doctrines most perversely drawn from the *religion of the Lamb*[1], the HORNS of its *fascinating* power? Does it not unite the subtlety of the serpent, with the fury of the dragon?—promise universal happiness, but lead to universal misery? Has it not caused them that dwell on the earth to make an IMAGE to (or *like*) the beast which had the wound by a sword, and did live?" An IMAGE in the form of the *antient Roman* government, which has already obliged *many* of the nations to yield

[1] See Barruel.

obedience

obedience to its new revived authority?—Exercifeth all the *civil* and *religious* tyranny of the first beast, or the Papal power of Antichrift, by depriving all men of their civil and religious privileges, who will not receive the *mark* of union with its abominable principles?—who has "made war with the faints," or fervants of God, and has "overcome many;" and who now openly blasphemes the God of heaven?

To what height of enormity—to what extent of dominion—the power of this tremendous image will be permitted to rife, muft remain for futurity to difcover.—But who will

[1] The following obfervations upon the Treaty of *Luneville* by a *political* writer in the Sun paper, Feb. 21, 1801, throws fome additional light upon a fubject, which time alone can clearly elucidate. "The execution of this double plan for aggrandizement on one fide of the Alps, and republicanizing on the other, is the main feature, which prefents itfelf in the Treaty of *Luneville*: it has been the object, and it is the effential principle of it. In this manner is the *whole of antient Gaul, and almoft all the Empire of the Weft*, viz. the largeft and beft part of the Continent of Europe divided *into five Republics*, united under the yoke, more or lefs ftrict, of one Man, and having before their eyes, only *fix Monarchies*, either weak or hoftile to one another, or at leaft divided in interefts and inclinations. Such a refult from nine years warfare is undoubtedly calculated

with now say it is impossible, or even improbable, that the city of Rome should soon become the seat of *this* devastating tyrant! — should soon become the seat of the Empire of APOSTATE INFIDELITY, or ATHEISM, as it

calculated deeply to afflict every friend to the Ancient Order of Society, and must not a little alarm the powers, who have to reproach themselves with weakness, treachery, or want of foresight. None of them can consider himself as secure from the caprice, the avarice, or the political immorality of the French Government, while WE ALONE, secure under the protection of our invincible Flag, and not having for a moment been guilty either of error, or hesitation in our conduct, have neither any self-reproach to feel, any sensible losses to deplore, or any serious alarms to conceive.

To revive the influence of Spain in Italy, and to connect it with that of the Pope, has been the third mean adopted to destroy that of *Austria*, and it is not a little curious to observe, that whilst the Chief Consul has refused, as he did at *Campo Formio*, to admit the *King of Naples* into the Treaty, and appears to meditate vengeance against him, he has bestowed on another branch of the House of Bourbon a reward for the fidelity which the Spanish Government has maintained towards the *Republic*. Policy alone has not dictated this conduct; there is in it an affectation of grandeur, and of *imitating the Romans*. They too were pleased to bestow part of their spoil on those princes who voluntarily passed under their yoke, and who set an example to the rest of the world of blind submission." *The Prince of Parma* accordingly went to Paris to *receive the Crown of Etruria* from Bonaparte; *and his Father* (the Duke of Parma) *did homage to him*, when he took possession of his new dominions. — Fourth Edit.

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has already been of PAGANISM, and POPERY; and thus render the resemblance between the image and the first beast yet more *literally* complete?—Nay, who will dare pronounce that this *most dreadful* Power of Antichrist, which has arisen in *the north*, shall not "plant the tabernacles of his palaces between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain?"[1]

It is observable, that the *duration* of the most *wonderful* form of the Papal Antichrist is fixed at 1260 years—from whatever time it obtained its power.—The *conquests* of the Mahometan Antichrist were also determined to an exact point—but no limits seem to be fixed for the power, or the duration of the power, of the Infidel Antichrist.—If the reason of this distinction be asked, it may perhaps be answered, Because this was to be the *last* form under which Antichrist should appear—"When the Son of man cometh, shall he find *faith* on the earth?"—And, because our Lord, who declares he will come "suddenly and unexpectedly, as a thief in the night," will himself take exemplary vengeance of this most daring and most bitter enemy to his name, his religion, and his ser-

[1] Dan. xi. 45.

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[illegible] judgment begin at the house of God," alluding to the calamities of his chosen people the Jews, and the trials and corruptions of the Christian Church, "what shall the end of *these wicked* be?" It is expressly said that things "should be *hastened towards the end*, for the sake of the elect." The Mahometan and Papal Antichrists have been allowed to decline gradually before the time of their final destruction—but the *apostate Infidel* Antichrist may *perhaps*, I had almost said *probably*, be cut down when at the height of its conquest, and its glory, by some signal display of divine power—when the *whole* of Antichrist shall be destroyed—the ancient people of God "shall be delivered"—and the glorious kingdom of Christ shall be established, according to the ancient expectation of Jews and Christians, in peace, holiness, and happiness for ever.

I have thus endeavoured to explain some of the various reasons which induce me to consider APOSTATE INFIDELITY, or ATHEISM, as one of the three principal forms of Antichrist by which the church of Christ was to suffer 1260 years—as having been described

[a] Dan. xii. 1.

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by Prophecy exactly as it now appears in the world—as having appeared AS A POWER ACTING BY A DELEGATE exactly at the time it might have been expected to appear—as being the predicted scourge of the corrupted church of Christ, and the *last* form of power which its enemy will be permitted to assume!—In this Chapter I have nearly confined myself to the Prophecies of Daniel and of St. John, because they contain the principal passages which a superficial reader might imagine to be irreconcileable with the opinion which I presume to offer, and with the interpretations of the best Commentators respecting the Church of Rome. And I trust it will now appear evident, that this opinion (supposing for a moment it be admitted as itself incontrovertibly just), arising out of EVENTS ACTUALLY PASSING BEFORE OUR EYES, which not only accurately fulfil "the word of Prophecy," but are utterly inexplicable without this key to point out their connexion with the past and future parts of the great plan which Prophecy displays—does in no respect contradict or invalidate the decided opinion of these learned men, that the Church of Rome is Antichrist.—Some of the most able and intelligent among these Commentators did indeed form nearly the same idea; and the accuracy

curacy of their conjectures concerning the *time* and the *country* wherein the power of Infidelity should *first* arise and reign, must be esteemed a strong confirmation of its *truth* even to us who have been brought by the stream of time to scenes which lay beyond the limits of their sight.—I have only contended for a more *appropriate* application of *those parts* of the Prophecies which appeared to most of them difficult, incongruous, and of doubtful reference to the Papal power.—But while I consider this point as established by their labours beyond the possibility of injury, and the Prophecy respecting Mahometanism as having been immoveably fixed by proofs equally clear, I contend that APOSTATE INFIDELITY, and its delegated instrument, DEMOCRATIC TYRANNY, have been predicted with equal precision; and that POPERY, MAHOMETANISM, and INFIDELITY, are all parts of the same Antichristian Power, and subject to the same fate.

The following Chapters will show the exactness with which the events of History correspond with the received interpretations concerning *Popery* and *Mahometanism*—trace the rise and progress of the Power of *Infidelity*, and point out the equal exactness with which

which it fulfils the Prophecies concerning it, with as much minuteness as the limits of this work will permit; and with a view to prove that these three branches of Antichristian Power form different parts of a general scheme of Prophecy.—And I trust it will be found, after an attentive examination, not only that this opinion is well founded, but that it shows the scattered rays of Prophetic light to be directed towards *one* point, gives harmony and connexion to the Apocalyptic visions, and explains the present fearful state of human affairs to be perfectly consistent with the Providence of God; and ultimately tending, under his direction, to the completion of the great, UNVARYING PLAN OF HIM WHO "RULETH THE MADNESS OF THE PEOPLE," AND WHO MAKETH EVEN "THE WRATH OF MAN TO PRAISE HIM."

END OF VOL. I.

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